FOOD HABITS AND PATTERNS OF THE MULTIRACIAL POPULATION OF CAPE TOWN

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PREFACE

Dietitians and nutritionists today realise the importance of knowing about peoples' food habits and patterns to be able to understand their dietary and medical problems more readily. It is my intention to study the current and traditional food habits and patterns of the various population groups by interviewing as many members of each group as possible on :

- daily eating patterns
- cooking methods
- traditional foods
- taboos, feasts and fasts

In the introduction the discussion will focus on the origin of food habits and patterns and the influencing factors in a wider context.

I.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FOOD PATTERNS

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Man's history begins approximately 30,000 years ago. At this time a primate lived on the edge of the forest near the open bushy grassland. Little is known about him, but he is thought to be the ancestor of both ape and modern man.

During the early stages of "hominization" the evolution of culture was closely associated with the evolution of learning patterns. Natural selection favoured individuals whose neural circuity could handle grammatical speech and who could respond in socially tranditional ways. The more complex our ancestor's neural circuity became, the more he depended on culture. Eventually a cultural "take-off" occurred; the rate of cultural evolution began to outstrip the rate of biological evolution. The "take-off" probably occurred between 100,000 and 50,000 B.C.

Man's food has been traced up to classical times but, unfortunately, no coherant line of historical and cultural aspects of the evolution of mankind's attitude to food and food habits has been established. Therefore, it seems

most reasonable to discuss the different stages individually :

1. The hunter-gatherers;

2. Agricultural settlements and the development of corporate kin groups;

3. Chiefdoms;

4. Complex societies.

THE HUNTER-GATHERERS:

The earliest cultural level anthropologists know about is generally referred to as hunting and gathering. It has been stated that early man (Homo erectus and Australopithecus) was primarily vegetarian, but he has done some hunting for up to a million years. Hunting slowly developed as man moved away from other primates; he became omnivorous, whereas other primates remained largely vegetarian.

Hunter-gatherers are always nomadic and they live in a wide variety of environments. Some are beneficient environments, others are harsh and dangerous. Hunter-gatherer

groups are usually small - often the group consists of no more than sixty people. Regulation of group size is achieved by a complex of factors, all of which impose certain penalties and deprivations upon the people who use them. The most important population limiting practices among them are abortion, femal infanticide and systematic neglect of female infants, contraception by prolonging lactation (up to three to four years) and death of mothers at childbirth.

Food intake of hunter-gatherers is extremely irregular, depending on availability and this again depends on environmental factors. Under harsh conditions it may occur that an animal can be killed only once a week, and plant products are available only during the raining season. It may therefore be thought that under these conditions of scarcity the hunter-gatherers will try to make maximum use of all potentially available food; they are, however, also characterised by customs and beliefs that prescribe certain foods or at least limit their consumption. The Eskimo, for example, observe a number of food taboos in connection with critical periods of the individual's life and development. Among the most outstanding of these are the food taboos that a woman is subject to for four or five days after giving birth. She may not eat raw meat or blood and is restricted to those foods that are believed to have beneficial effects on the child. For

example, it is felt that she should eat duck's wings to make her child a good runner or paddler. Because the Eskimo are often beset by food shortages, they sometimes have to eat forbidden foods. In such cases there are several things that a person can do to neutralize the taboo. He first rubs the forbidden food over his body and then hangs the meat outside and allows it to drain. Another act that is regarded as particularly efficacious is to stuff a mitten into the collar of his parka with the hand-side facing outward; it is believed that the harmful effects of the taboo food go into the mitten and travel away from him.

The Eskimo makes a sharp distinction between land and sea animal, and thus they are never eaten at the same time, nor are they hunted with the same weapons. The Eskimo believe that the products of the two spheres should be kept separate, maintaining that land and sea animals are repulsive to each other and should not be brought together. Thus, for example, before hunting caribou (a spring activity) a man must clean his body of all the seal grease that has accumulated during winter; similarly, before whaling in April, the individual's body must be washed to get rid of the scent of caribou. If these rules are violated, the hunter or whaler will be unsuccessful in his food quest; the consequences of this, of course, can be dire.

Present day hunter-gatherers in Southern Africa are the

!Kung Bushmen in the Kalahari. There are only a few groups left and in another generation there may be even fewer. They are not dying out, but they have become more and more westernized and lose most of their traditional culture. Their life style is changing from that of nomadic hunter-gatherers to that of sessile agriculturalists. Instead of nuts, vegetables and meat they now consume milk and grains in large amounts. Their infants are weaned early instead of the usual breast feeding period of 3 to 4 years. They are not weaned onto solid foods as previously, but onto soft foods.

AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENTS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF CORPORATE KIN GROUPS

One of the greatest changes in man's life occurred when he moved from being a food gatherer to being a food producer. The development was a gradual one, probably influenced by the increasing scarcity of plant food and animals. The historic hunter-gatherers probably might have believed that they could increase the rate of reproduction of plant and animals by depicting them in murals or by other magico religious methods.

Farming and stock-raising provided the material basis for high-density, sedentary settlements and gave rise to rapid population increase. During the Neolithic period

(10,000 to 2,000 B.C.), Homo sapiens changed from a rare to an abundant species. Farming and stock-raising also set the stage for profound alterations in social life, centering an access to land, water and other basic resources, and for the development of social structures characterised by profound differences in wealth and power. Land ownership in some form must have been designed in order to protect individual groups. A significant accompaniment of the development of farming communities was the introduction of rites, symbols, taboos, etc, in which food plays an extremely important role. Feasts and fasts became an integral element of the rites and religious assemblages in these societies - food was used as a material representation of cohesiveness.

Domestication involves a complex symbiotic relationship between human populations and certain favoured plants and animals. The domesticators destroy or clear away any undesirable flora and fauna from the domesticant's habitat. They adjust the supply of space, water, sunlight and nutrients and they interfere in the reproduction activity of the domesticants to ensure maximum use of available resources. Control over the reproductive activity of domesticants depends upon genetic changes wrought during the process of domestication.

The earliest archeologically known transition from hunting and gathering to agriculture took place in the Middle East.

This region extends from the Jordan Valley northwards to southern Turkey, eastwards to the headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates River in Syria and Iraq, and southwards along both flanks of the Zagros Mountains, which form the border between Iraq and Iran. Domesticated barley, wheat, goats, sheep and pigs dating from 9,000 to 7,000 B.C. have been identified at a number of sites in this region. There is some evidence that the area of earliest domestication, especially of cattle, pigs and goats, extended as far west as Greece. Also it now seems likely that leguminous plants including peas, lentils, broad beans and chickpeas were domesticated almost at the same time as the basic grain crops.

The region in which middle eastern agriculture arose corresponds roughly to the areas in which wheat, barley, peas, lentils, goats and sheep occur naturally in a wild state. Prior to the emergence of domesticants, many Middle Eastern peoples included these plants and animals into their food supply through hunting and gathering techniques.

Initially, the contribution grains made to the food supply was relatively minor. Although wild barley and wheat are highly nutritious, their use was severly limited by a number of technical problems. First, the ripening of wild wheat and barley occurs during a three week period in late spring. Hence, if wild grains were to form part

of the diet during an extended portion of the year, a rather large amount had to be harvested and stored. Moreover, to make use of such a harvest, a considerable amount of additional labour was needed to process the seeds. The processing technology was in itself quite complex since seeds had to be cleaned, roasted (in order to crack the husks), husked, winnowed, ground and cooked. Carrying around heavy stones needed for grinding would be especially troublesome for a hunting and gathering group. The obvious solution to these difficulties was to settle in relatively permanent dwellings where grain could be stored and the heavy grinding and roasting equipment left in place. Middle eastern groups had begun to settle down in permanent villages a thousand or more years before domesticated varieties of wheat and barley were in use.

As permanent settlements more and more often came to be located in the middle of dense fields of grain, herds of wild sheep, goats and other animals were forced into closer and closer contact with people. Dogs were tamed as pets and aides in controlling movement of other animals.

Approximate times of domestication of some animals:

Sheep	9,000 B.C.
Dog	8,400 B.C.
Goat	7,400 B.C.
Pig	7,000 B.C.

Guinea Pig	6,000 B.C.
Cattle	5,500 B.C.
Silk Moth	3,500 B.C.
Llama	3,500 B.C.
Horse	3,000 B.C.
Cat	1,600 B.C.

CHIEFDOMS

Once the hunter-gatherer societies changed fully to farming, new domesticants, tools, productive techniques, and forms of social life appeared with explosive rapidity. This free "explosion" lasted from 8000 to 3000 B.C.; during those five thousand years technology, social organisation and ideology changed more drastically than during the preceding two or three million years.

For a number of reasons, probably related to an increase in warfare, walled towns were built shortly after the appearance of domesticated plants and animals. The most astonishing of these towns was Jericho, whose earliest walls and towers date to 8000 B.C.

About 5500 B.C. cattle joined the list of domesticated animals. Because of their bulk and power, they constituted a major ecosystem breakthrough in their own right. Harnessed to ploughs, which were invented by 3500 B.C. or

earlier, cattle made it possible to farm a variety of virgin soil zones. As the population increased, village settlements spread out over the fertile but rainless southern portion of the Tigris - Euphrates valley. Confined at first to the natural watercourses, dense clusters of villages and towns came increasingly to rely on artificial irrigation to water their fields of wheat and barley.

The catalogue of technological achievements now included spinning and weaving, as well as ceramics, smelting and casting of bronze, baked brick, etc. Here, for the first time, human communities became divided into rulers and ruled, rich and poor, literate and illiterate, townspeople and peasants, priests and chiefs or kings. For the first time an institution appeared in which political and economic power was exercised by a single person or groups of people over one or many communities.

Political authority of chiefs was negligible at first since chiefs failed the power of ruling people complete, but finally they gained more and more power. They started to collect taxes and tributes and stimulated the production of economic surpluses and controlled the redistribution of these among their subjects on various occasions, as during feasts in the celebration of religious ceremonies, rites of passage of members of chiefly families, and periods

of famine. The accumulation of these surplusses requires conservation policies. Because techniques of food preservation were poorly developed in preliterate chiefdoms, the heads of chiefdoms often adopted the policy of placing taboos - often phrased in religious terms - on different crops or resource areas, forbidding their consumption until the prohibitions were lifted. These taboos, however, were not exclusively for conservations purposes; they were also occasionally designed to underwrite higher standards of living for the chiefs themselves. For instance, in some Polynesian societies, as in Samoa, fishermen were required to obey a taboo that a portion of their catch must be given to the chief. The penalties for violating such taboos were supernaturally produced illness or often misfortunes.

COMPLEX SOCIETIES

As societies became increasingly complex, heterogenous and divided along the lines of caste, class and ethnic affiliation, their dietary customs became correspondingly less uniform because they mirrored these divisions and inequalities. Although these distinctive customs are almost always placed in the context of religious belief and practice, according to many anthropologists, the dietary observances in everyday behaviour are primarily

shaped by economic and social considerations; moreover, observances at the village level rarely correspond directly to formal prescriptions and proscriptions.

The dietary laws and customs of complex nations and of the world's major religions, which developed as institutional parts of complex nations, are always based on the prior assumption of social stratification, traditional privilege, and social, familial and moral lines that cannot be crossed. Taboos and other regulations in connection with food are incompatible with the idea of an open society. Nevertheless, complex nations were characterised by caste organisations, that, in almost all cases, religion helped to legitimate. Caste systems, in addition to their other characteristics, are supported by deeply felt fears of pollution or contamination as a result of unguarded contact of the more "pure" with those who are less "pure".

Although there is no doubt that the development of caste is limited to some form of occupational separation in society, which, in turn, leads to the development of ideas concerning the separation of unclean persons from the ordinary or the ordinary from the superpure, there is considerable controversy over the origins of caste systems. Regardless of the origins, however, the separation of castes is always mirrored in rules for eating that, when breached, represent a threat to the social order and to

the individual's sense of identity. There is also a question amongst scholars whether or not the caste system is unique to India. Nevertheless, in Japan as well as India (and probably in the Republic of South Africa), eating together implies social and ritual equality. In India and Japan, a person who cooks for another and serves his food must be equal or superior in rank to the recipient of the food; only in this way can the latter avoid pollution.

Migration and food dispersal form an interesting chapter in the history of man's food. As man moved from the Middle East, he found new foods growing in his new settlements. Whenever he moved from one place to another, the new foods found increased the variety of his diet. Because he took seeds of plants along as he moved about, it is necessary to investigate carefully to determine which foods are truly indigenous to a region. The native home of a plant is considered by some as the area where one finds the greatest number of wild species.

The "home" of many plant foods has been proposed:

Sugar probably came from India. Sweet oranges originate in China and sour ones in India and probably came overland into Spain with the early traders. Many of our foods

were known and consumed centuries ago. The modern traveller must often exert a special effort to taste foods indigenous to a country.

As previously mentioned, emigrants to another country usually took their seeds with them. An interesting story of an old apple tree which grew in Fort Vancouver, Washington, is told. It is said that a young girl in England, a guest at a dinner party for a departing sailor, put the seeds of this original tree into his pockets. It was the custom to wish a departing friend well and incidentally offer him food for his uncertain future.

Salt cod is used so much in the west Indies since it was used as ballast in the rum-seeking vessels from New England. Okra has two prominent homes - coastal West Africa and the Southern United States. Boswell, in his classic article "Our Vegetable Travellers", says that Okra, named from a Portuguese corruption of its Congolese name, originated in Ethiopia, and was taken to Arabia and then moved in North Africa. From there it probably migrated to coastal West Africa, possibly taken by Portuguese sailors.

The dispersion of foods indigenous to one country into another has always increased the variety of man's diet even from ancient times. Today, with rapid air travel, the difference in diet in different countries becomes less and less marked.

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II.

FACTORS INFLUENCING FOOD HABITS AND PATTERNS

(a) CULTURAL

(b) SOCIAL

(c) RELIGIOUS

II. FACTORS INFLUENCING FOOD HABITS AND PATTERS

CULTURAL INFLUENCES

Culture consists of values, attitudes, habits and customs acquired by learning which starts with the earliest experiences of the child. Much of it is not deliberately taught by anyone, some of it is largely unconscious because it is so thoroughly internalized.

From the very first for the human being ingestion is culturally structured. Is the infant put to the breast or given the bottle? Will his first suckling be that of cholostrum, or of milk, or of some other fluid? Will he be held in a fetal position as he suckles, cradled in naked contact with the mother, experiencing simultaneously comfort, social warmth, solace, emotional communication and nutrition, or will he experience his first feeding held in meticulous sanitation against the starched bosom of someone to whom he is merely a case with a name, of someone who regards and expresses this situation as one of sheer nutrition. These questions are answered differently according to the culture of the society into which the infant is born.

The first experience of solid food will also differ according to the culture. If the infant is born to a Tikopia mother (Polynesia), he will get premasticated food, warmed with the mother's body warmth, partly digested by her salivary juices, his mother will put it directly into his mouth with her lips. In our society he will get food with a hard metal or plastic spoon introduced into a mouth which has never experienced anything so solid and hard and into which not even teeth have yet erupted. In all this the culture enters into the food experience, shaping, emphasizing, even choosing the significant factors for defining that experience.

THE FUNCTION OF CULTURE

The culture of a people develops over a long period of time. It is partly the result of this people's adaptation to its environment. The environment may be harsh and hostile, and the way of life developed by this people is what enabled them to survive. Sometimes the changing of these habits by an outsider who does not understand these adaptations may upset the balance with nature. It will then do more harm than good. This has been the case when some health workers have tried to impose Western culture and habits upon people in other parts of the world, without prior study and appreciation of the established customs. Such programs have failed for the above reason.

The culture of a people also develops as a means of interpreting common life experiences, such as birth, death, illness, disease, sex and natural phenomena. Rituals, taboos, totems, habits and practices develop to explain, placate or protect, and to establish human and environmental relationships. A certain poisonous plant, for example, may have become taboo as a food, because tribal ancestors observed that it caused death.

FOOD IN A CULTURE

Food habits are among the oldest and most entrenched aspects of many cultures. They exert deep influence on the behaviour of the people. The cultural background determines what shall be eaten, as well as when and how it shall be eaten. There is, of course, considerable variation; and both rational and irrational, beneficial and injurious customs are found in every part of the world. Nevertheless, by and large, food habits are based upon food availability, economics and symbolism. Included among these influential factors the geography of the country, the type of agriculture practiced by the people, their economy and market practices, and their history and traditions.

Items considered to be food in one culture may be regarded with disgust or may actually cause illness in persons of

other cultures, just as food experience in one culture is defined as nutrition, whereas other societies emphasize the aspect of social sharing to such an extent that nutrition and even the search for satiety may become secondary. Culture may present food mainly as a means for stilling hunger, or of getting nutrition, or as a way to psychosomatic health; it may regard eating as a duty or as a virtue, or as a gustatory pleasure, or as a social or religious communion. The individual's reaction to the food he eats must be taken into account. What will stimulate his appetite, what will bring a feeling of satiety, what is tasty, depends on the particular culture of the individual in question. The Ifugao tribesmen of norther Luzon in the Phillipines eat sweet potatoes without pleasure, what arouses their appetite is rice. These people are famous for adapting their steep mountain terrain to enable the production of rice by forming multiple, narrow, terraced, dry rice fields in which they grow a major proportion of this staple food. The Ifugao are also known for their enjoyment of other dietary items which they prize, such as dragonflies and locusts, which they boil, dry and grind into a powder. They eat crickets, flying and red ants which they fry in lard and also water bugs and a large variety of beetles. We would hardly ever consider these insects as food. On the other hand we regard milk as a basic food; in many other cultural groups it is regarded with disgust and

akin to mucous discharge. The Greek, for example, drink milk hot after boiling or, more frequently, eat it in the form of cheese or yoghurt, but never in the form of a cream sauce, or as an ingredient of bread. In a Greek home bread is the main food. It is the meal. Other foods are considered as accompaniments to bread and are eaten between bites of bread.

According to our culture, also, we decide which part of a plant or animal to eat: leaves or flower, stalk or root, muscle and liver or the entire animal including spleen and lung, and intestines, eyeballs and cheeks. Or, according to the culture again, we may have no choice. For example, among the Zulu, when a sacrificed ox is killed, a year after the death of the head of the family, the entire kin group assembles, and each individual is given a part of the ox according to age, sex, relationship to the family, need or personal preference are not taken into account. A similar pattern has been observed among the Eskimo when the head of the family brings home a seal, which is the only source of food in winter.

The kind of food appropriate to different occasions during the year, to different days of the week, or on different hours of the day is culturally patterned also; here usually religion plays a vital role.

SOCIAL INFLUENCES

Sociology may be defined in the simplest terms as the study of group life. It is concerned with man's group behaviour, the numerous activities, processes and structures by which his social life goes on. Through the discipline and methods of sociology human behaviour is understood in terms of social phenomena. Such fields and problems as social change, urbanization, rural life, the family, the community, race relations, crime and delinquency are studied. This broad behavioral science has many implications for nutrition. Two aspects of social organization that particularly concern health care professionals are class structure and value systems.

The structure of a society is largely formed by groupings according to such factors as economic status, education, occupation and residence. Within a given society many groups exist, whose values and habits vary. These subgroups within a larger culture are called subcultures. They may be established on the basis of religion, age, sex, social class, occupational group or political party. Within these subgroups there may be even small groupings with distinguished attitudes, values and habits - the community juvenile gang, the college fraternity, the industrial executives, the families in a given neighbourhood or the nurses in a hospital hierarchy. A person may be a member of several subcultural groups, each of which

influences his values, attitudes and habits.

Social class, especially influences value systems, responses and behaviour patterns. Social classes may be considered as being comprised of those persons having similar community status, responsibilities, privileges.

Another important aspect of a society's social organization is its value system, which developes as a result of its history and heritage. Values held in America, for example, stem largely from its relatively recent pioneer history. The majority of American settlers were from rigidly puritan backgrounds. Their highest values were placed upon industry, self-denial, and self-control, work, will-power, cleanliness, honesty, responsibility and initiative. These values became intensified because the survival of settlers often depended upon exercise of these characteristics. Pleasure and entertainment were considered to have secondary value at best, and in most instances were held by settlers who lived through the most difficult pioneer periods to be unworthy or even evil. The American system is based on equality, sociality, success and change. All of these values influence attitudes towards health care and food habits. The placement of a life value on equality leads health workers to establish standards of quality health care for all people. The high respect accorded to sociality builds peer group pressures and

status-seeking within social groups. Foods may be accepted because they are high-status foods, or rejected because they are low-prestige foods. The esteem in which success is held often leads persons to measure life in terms of competitive superlatives. They want to set the best table, to provide the most abundant supply of food for the family, and to have the biggest eater and, therefore, the fattest of any baby in the neighbourhood. The value that is placed upon change leads families or individuals to seek constant variety in their diets, to be geared for action, and to seek quick cooking, conveniently prepared foods. In response to such market demands, food technologists are producing an increasing array of food products each year.

The food habits of people in any setting are highly socialized. These habits perform significant social functions, some of which may not always be evident to the persons who have such habits.

Food is a symbol of sociability, warmth, friendliness and social acceptance. Breaking bread together binds a group. Similar use of food for binding fellowship is seen in the honor reception, the wedding breakfast, the political party banquet, and the serving of food to visitors. From the first hours of life, eating is not a solitary experience. It is a matter of two people - a feeding

adult and an eating newborn.

An extreme example of the social function of food is seen in the practice of the mountain Arapesh, a Papuan people of New Guinea. Here food and feeding, in its entire process from production or gathering to consumption is regarded primarily as a medicine for social warmth and intercourse and this view of food affects the nutritional pattern as it makes for gross inefficiency from our point of view in food production.

The Arapesh live in a mountainous area, so rugged that there is almost no level land and the small garden plots may be separated by miles of difficult territory from a small village. The most economical way to cultivate these plots would be one gardener working alone; yet up to six men may work on a small plot, with their wives and children travelling from plot to distant plot enjoying each other's society and sharing of work. Margret Mead found that for the Arapesh, the ideal distribution of food is for each person to eat food grown by another, eat game killed by another, eat pork from pigs that have been fed by people at a distance, and so on. So a man walks miles with his coconut saplings to plant them on the house sites of others, he gives his pigs to relations in distant hamlets to feed and he hunts only to give his kill away, since the lowest form of humanity is the man who eats his own kill. Thus it is assured that every

mouthful that the Arapesh consumes has been a medium of social participation and the result is that the Arapesh, spending about one third of their life time travelling, are grossly malnourished. But for these people this is their way of life and without it they would be extremely unhappy.

The Arapesh represent, in their approach to the entire food process, a large number of societies in the Pacific area; societies where the main part of the harvest is given to someone else, ideally to function only as gifts and to eventually decay uneaten. These are societies where the exchange of food does not mean the introduction of a variety, but rather a means of social intercourse. We have societies where the custom of sharing special or excess foods influenced diets in other ways; for example, it meant that no methods of meat preservation were necessary as with the Ifugao of Luzon; here animals were slaughtered only for sacrifice, and the flesh of a large animal would be distributed to all - thus assuring periodic feasts of meat to rich and poor alike.

RELIGION

The formal religions of the world have long had a marked influence on the dietary habits of people of the world. Each major religion is different and each has very specific,

strict rules delineating what is acceptable as food. But long before any such religions were established or religious sects developed, man learned that there was some force, spirit or being, something supernatural that influenced his life and the world in which he lived. Why else should there by times when food was plentiful and he had more than he could eat, and at other periods he faced famine and starvation! With little understanding but much apprehension, he sought to propriate the unseen forces, gods, spirits, deities, unknowns, that appeared to overrule his efforts. He sought to please them by sacrifices, ceremonies and rituals all centred on food because it was essential for his existence. And so there developed in every society and culture a number of rituals associated with every step of obtaining or producing food. Others in the tribe or group, somewhat more perceptive and understanding of the needs, assumed or were given the responsibility of directing these rituals and gradually developed forms and specific directions for appeasing these gods or supernatural forces. Rules, restriction, prohibitions and direct commands came into being and were handed down to each successive "religious" leader. All this happened long before there was any written form of language or communication, so that for many food habits practiced even today, their origin or meaning is lost in antiquity. Memory training, however, was so effective that modern natives can recite consistently their genealogical descent through a thousand or more names, along with other historical events in their tribal lives.

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III.

FOOD HABITS AND PATTERNS OF SELECTED POPULATION GROUPS IN CAPE TOWN

(a) EUROPEAN

(b) BANTU (XHOSA)

(c) CAPE COLOURED

(d) INDIAN (MUSLIM AND HINDU)

(e) CAPE MALAY

(f) CHINESE

(a) EUROPEAN

CHRISTIANITY AND DIETARY HABITS

Christianity did not develop elaborate dietary rules and customs. The New Testament repudiated the entire laws of purity, especially those pertaining to food. Jesus is said to have declared that defilement could not be caused by any external agent.

Food, however, in terms of the Last Supper and the Eucharist, plays an important part in Christianity. As is written in the Bible, Jesus foresaw his death and performed a simple ceremony during a last meal to bring home the significance of his death to the Twelve Apostles, he broke a loaf into pieces and gave it to them saying, "Take up this, it is my body". After they had eaten, he took the cup of wine and said "This is my blood".

The rituals of the Eucharist provide clearest examples in the Christian churches or confessions of the relationship between social stratification and food behaviour. Christianity, unlike Judaism or Hinduism and other Asian religions, was never tied to a caste system; correspondingly it repudiated the entire body of purity - pollution laws of the Old Testament. Christianity was, however, part of the early European social system that was based on clear

cut separations of social classes. Religious food customs in Christianity, most notably in the Eucharist reflect this.

The first Christian churches developed alongside the most rigid social stratification in European history, with elaborate notions of class authority and superiority and subordination. The separation of those in authority from the masses of ordinary people is mirrored in the Roman Eucharist ritual in which the sacrament's celebrant - the officiating priest- partakes of the bread and wine first and then serves only the bread to those of the faithful who wish it. In most Protestant confessions the officiating minister also partakes of the bread and the wine first, then he serves both to the congregation. In the Presbytarian ritual, the minister partakes first and then serves it to the elders who then serve the people.

The most notable dietary law in Christianity is the Roman Catholic proscription to abstain from eating meat, soup or gravy made from meat on Fridays and Ash Wednesday. There is no restriction on the amount of food eaten. The forty days of Lent have traditionally been a period of motrification, including practices of fasting and abstinence. In some communities on the days of fast only one full meal is allowed and two other light meatless meals may nowadays be taken according to each one's needs. Meat may nowadays be taken at the principal meal on a day of

fast, except on Fridays and Ash Wednesday. Everyone from the twenty-first to the fifty-ninth birthday inclusive is bound to observe the "law of fast".

Ember days - a Wednesday, Friday and Saturday at the end of each of the four seasons - seem to be the survivals of full weekly fasts formerly practiced four times a year.

Vigils are single fast days that have been observed before certain feast days and festivals.

Rogation Days are the three days before Ascension Day and are marked by a fast preparatory to that festival.

Christmas

Christmas among Latin Catholics is preceded by a day of fasting and abstinence in preparation for the Lord's Nativity. But on Christmas Day, ever since the feast was established, a great dinner is held. Naturally over the years each population group has developed its own treasured customs in connection with the Christmas meal on the 25th of December (northern European people, e.g. Norwegians, Danish, Swedish and German hold their Christmas meal on the eve of the 24th.)

The traditional English Christmas meal includes a large bird like the duck, goose, chicken and turkey (most popular

here) and a mince pie. Today often other meat dishes are common (roast pork, roast leg of lamb, etc.). Plum Pudding is a national Christmas dish amongst the English, other population groups have, however, incorporated it into their Christmas fare. Here it is commonly served with a hot brandy sauce. Usually more than one meat dish and more than one dessert is served.

Christmas cakes are baked on the eve of the feast and then eaten during the season. In early times they were said to bring special blessings of good luck and health. The English bake cakes circular in shape and flavoured with caraway seeds. The Greek decorate theirs with a cross on top and leave it on the table during the Holy Night in the hope that Christ himself will come and eat it. The Germans bake a special kind of bread, the Christstollen which is made of flour, butter, sugar nuts and raisins and a variety of Christmas pastry made with honey, Weihnachtsgebäck - Lebkuchen, Pfefferkuchen, Pfeffernüsse.

Easter

The origin of the Easter egg has been traced back to a fertility lore of the Indo-European races. Later the egg became a symbol of spring. In Christian times the egg has bestowed upon it a religious interpretation, becoming a symbol of the rock tomb out of which Christ

emerged to the New Life of His ressurection. There was in addition a very practical reason for making the egg a special sign of Easter joy, since it used to be one of the foods that were forbidden in Lent.

Easter eggs (hen's eggs and chocolate ones) are given as presents to children, relatives and friends. They are often beautifully decorated and coloured. Easter bunnies, made of chocolate, marzipan, or pastry are popular with most children.

THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS

The Seventh Day Adventists, a millenarian sect, need to be mentioned because of their strict vegetarianism. They insist that grains, nuts, fruit and vegetables make up the diet chosen for them by the Creator. They are forbidden to eat or touch any animal that does not have cloven hooves and that does not chew its cud (e.g. the camel, rock badger, hare, swine), any fish without fins and scales, any bird of prey, any flying insect with four legs except locusts, any small animal crawling on the ground, and any reptile (The Living Bible; Leviticus II).

The Seventh Day Adventists strive for "Better Life" which implies amongst other factors eating a "wholesome

diet" (health food) devoid of any poisons. Meat contains pesticides, antibiotics, filth, infectious agents such as bacteria, viruses and others and should thus be avoided. Vegetarian foods are considered to be disease free (man does not share diseases with plants).

Most members of the sect are lacto-ovo vegetarians or lactovegetarians; very few are vegans. No known source of vitamin B12 is present in plant foods and the only possible source for the vegans could be fortified yeast and soya milk. They claim, however, that bacteria, molds and fungi produce adequate amounts and that the intestinal flora might be a good source.

The health consciousness of the Seventh Day Adventists has resulted in a number of faddist ideas (quoted from a book by E.G. White: Counsels on diet and food): fruit are healthgiving; a temporary fruit diet is required in the case of sickness; meat is an atherosclerosis causing agent; meat could spread cancer infections; sugar is not good for the stomach; sugar clogs the system; fruit and vegetables should be eaten raw, fried potatoes are not healthful; desserts which take so much time to prepare are detrimental to health. Seventh Day Adventists do not smoke, drink any liquor, coffee or tea. Decaffeinated coffee and bush tea are allowed. All kinds of stimulants and tranquillizers are forbidden to them - in fact they are extremely sceptical about any kind of drug

treatment.

There are no specific fast days prescribed, but members of the sect are requested to fast on prayer days (prayer for the nation, crisis, a family member in need, etc.).

THE EUROPEAN EATING HABITS

Before Van Riebeeck landed at the Cape in 1652, the Cape had little to offer to the sailors. They could barter for cattle and have been reported to have picked sorrels growing on the slopes of Lion's Head as an antiscorbutic agent. The Hottentots had a few wild foods to offer which are still consumed by some people today:

The uintjie (bulb of morea edulis, Babiana and Albuca) flowers in spring time and the bulb can be boiled. The coarse husks can then be stripped off the bulb and the white kernel is eaten with vinegar, pepper and salt or butter and salt. It's size, flavour and texture is similar to that of the chestnut.

The "hottentot fig"(mesembrianthemum edible) is still used today for jam making by some people.

To the few indigenous foods the resources of Europe and the

Fig. 36. *Moraea edulis.*
Half natural size.

Fig. 25. *Albuca canadensis.*
Half natural size.

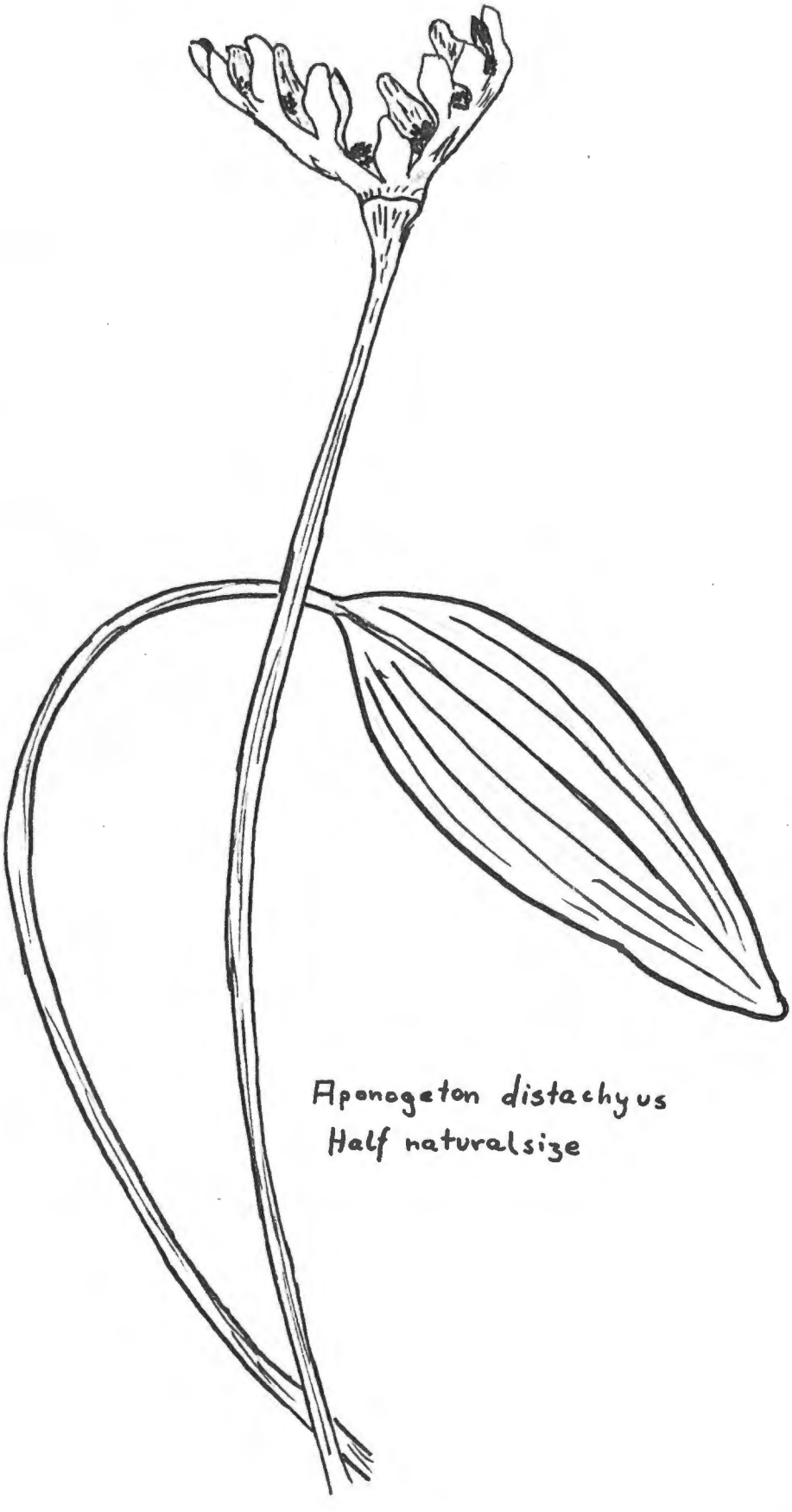
Fig. 41. *Babiana stricta.*
Half natural size.

East were rapidly added and various fruits and vegetables were established in the Dutch East India Company's garden.

The typical Cape dishes, in general, owe more to their method of preparation than to their ingredients. Kitchens lacked facilities found in Europe and therefore pot roasting became the traditional method of preparing a meal. Meat had to be eaten while it was fresh or it had to be preserved in the form of biltong (the meat is cut in strips and is then placed in a brine solution consisting of salt, vinegar, yellow sugar, saltpetre, bicarbonate of soda and coriander seeds, for approximately 36 hours and then hung up to dry) which is still extremely popular today.

For centuries the trek-ox supplied most of the beef of the Cape. Traditional cookery of the Cape is thus not designed to cope with tender meat, but methods required prolonged cooking and roasting. The Cape bredie is a kind of stew in which the vegetables has been reduced to a fairly thick consistency. The tomato bredie is the most popular one and features in almost every household.

A recipe which dates back to the Hottentot times is the wateruintjie or waterblommetjie bredie as the Cape Coloureds call it. Early springtime in the Cape is marked by the appearance in sluggish streams and shallow vleis of the white flowers of the wateruintjie or waterblommetjie



Aponogeton distachyus
Half naturalsize

(Aponogeton distachyus). People can be seen wading in the water picking the flowers. Flowers picked for cooking must be fresh and young and need to be washed thoroughly. A sharp flavoured ingredient is required with them in the bredie and the sorrel, which flowers at the same time, or spices are useful ingredients.

Other traditional dishes of the Cape are Kop-en-Pootjies (Sheep's head and trotters) and pens-en-pootjies (tripe and trotters); they are, however, more popular with the Afrikaans speaking people than with the English ones. Bobotie, a minced baked curry dish, has been adopted from the Malays and is extremely popular.

Braaivleis is traditional to the Cape but has become a national custom. Wood used for the "braaing" may be oak or bluegum, but never pine. Mutton chops and boerewors (sausage spiced with coriader, nutmeg, clove) are the usual fare at a braaivleis. The chops should be grilled crisp (and be a bit charred). A less frequent item on the braaivleis menu is sosaties (spiced skewered meat), also originally a Malay dish.

Rice is the staple of the old Cape, and in many households rice and potatoes are served together at every meal. Yellow rice (colouring - turmeric) is an oriental version and is often served on Sundays with roast chicken or duck. Sweet potatoes are relatively popular and may be served boiled, mashed with butter, or baked with butter, cinnamon

and brown sugar.

Vegetables commonly eaten are pumpkin, squash, marrow, butternuts, peas, carrots, cabbage, cauliflower, turnips, fresh and dried beans.

With the soups the emphasis is generally more on the thicker ones than on the clear consommé type. Tomato, pea, bean and oxtail soup appear on most menus.

The most commonly eaten fish is kingklip, stockfish, hake, pilchard and salted or smoked snoek. Pickled fish has been adopted from the Cape Malays. A hospitable custom in the Old Cape was for visitors to bring gifts with them - those from the coast took pickled fish to their friends up-country. Shellfish is popular but expensive.

Sweets and Desserts: Melktert is more than a pastry. It is a gesture like the breaking of bread in other times and places. It may be served as a sweet or cake and features on many other important occasions. Other common sweets and cakes are: koeksisters, apple tart, raisin bread, boerbeskuit, chocolate cake, swiss roll, fruit cakes, extremely sweet refrigerator cakes, vinegar pudding and others.

Fruit is very popular and anything in season is eaten by

most people.

It is custom among hospitable people to serve coffee whenever one calls at their house. Coffee may be instant, percolated or filtered and is often mixed with chicory. Whether tea or coffee is served is a matter of individual taste but tea is preferred in many households.

A typical day's menu would be :

Breakfast: Porridge or cereal with milk and sugar.
Toast with marmalade and cheese.
Egg, either fried, pached or scrambled.
Sometimes fruit or fruit juice.
Tea or coffee with milk

Breakfast is often missed by young people and many females and is often eaten standing in the kitchen.

Lunch: Sandwich (cheese, egg, ham)
Coffee or fruit juice or
A canteen meal.

Dinner: Some form of meat, chicken, fish.
Vegetables, usually two kinds, or salads
Potatoes and/or rice
Sometimes dessert.

Sunday lunch usually consists of a braai with friends and relatives or some kind of roast. In the evenings snacks or sandwiches are served.

THE GREEK EATING PATTERN

The Greek eating pattern differs considerably from the abovementioned pattern. Greek families are closely-knit, and meals in many homes can be considered as a family ritual. Everyday meals are simple, but on holidays special meals are prepared. Bread can be considered to be the meal. It is always present and is eaten between bites of other food.

Lamb is the most popular meat, little beef, but some pork and chicken are eaten. Some characteristic meat dishes are:

Moussaka - alternate layers of fried potatoes, egg plant or squash, cheese, cooked ground meat in spiced tomato sauce covered with thin pastry and baked.

Kreas souvlas - barbecued lamb, brizzoles - boiled lamb or pork chops; yiouvarlakia - meat balls and rice with egg-lemon sauce or tomato sauce.

Ketta vrasti - boiled chicken eaten hot or cold.

Psari scharas - broiled fish with olive oil and lemon sauce seasoned with chopped parsely and mustard.

Psari plake - baked fish with tomatoes, onions parsley, and olive oil.

Vegetables are usually cooked until very soft and are often seasoned with a meat broth or tomato with onions, olive oil and parsley. (Olive oil is used in all cooking. Vegetables may be the main dish or a side dish. Large amounts of vegetables are usually eaten as salads (with a dressing of olive oil, vinegar, salt and pepper). Legumes are popular.

Fruits are eaten in large amounts usually peeled and rarely are they eaten with the hands - a special knife and fork are used.

Milk is not used to a large extent. It is added to tea and coffee and sometimes consumed as a warm drink by children. Goats milk cheese (feta) is the tradditional one, but is extremely expensive and cottage cheese and cheddar are accepted widely.

The Greeks have adopted many European and English dishes,

but not many of the traditional Cape dishes such as bredies, bobotie, etc.

Some characteristic vegetable and cereal dishes and desserts are:

Yiachni - chopped onion browned in olive oil, vegetable added with tomato and seasoning, simmered until soft.

Dolmathes - meat and rice mixture rolled in cabbage or vine leaves, steamed and served with egg sauce.

Paragemista - stuffed vegetables (egg plant, zucchini, green peppers, tomatoes).

Tiganita - fried vegetables served with garlic or tomato sauce.

Fasiola yiachni - dried beans cooked with tomatoes and onions.

Pilafi - rice to which, after it has been browned in butter, both or water is added and simmered until the liquid is absorbed.

Tyropetta and Spanacopetta - cheese pie and spinach pie; thin layers of pastry brushed with olive oil,

alternating with cheese and egg mixture or cheese and spinach.

Pastitsio - alternating layers of noodles, macaroni, or spaghetti with tomato sauce containing meat and spices and cheese, covered with a thick white sauce, bread crumbs, more cheese and baked.

Macaronia me kima - macaroni with meat-tomato sauce.

Kritharaki - cooked cereals made of flour and water, formed into grains shaped like rice, added to cooked meat.

Tsoureki - an Easter holiday bread similar to coffee cake, shaped in a braid and glazed with fruit and nuts.

Baklavas - many layers of very thin pastry brushed with butter and sprinkled with nuts, sugar, spices, cut in diamond shapes and baked, served with syrup.

Lou kou mathes - batter of plain flour, yeast, water, dropped in fat and fried, served with honey and cinnamon.

Melomacarona - short dough (flour, oil, orange juice, soda, sugar) filled with a mixture of nuts, sugar

sealed and baked, dipped in syrup and sprinkled with nuts.

Risogalo - rice custard sprinkled with cinnamon.

THE ITALIAN FOOD PATTERN

Sharing of food and companionship is an important part of the Italian pattern of life. Just as with the Greek people families are closely knit and thus meals are always family meals.

Breakfast is usually light, the large main meal is eaten in the middle of the day and a small meal is common in the evening.

Milk is seldom used alone as a beverage, but is frequently consumed with coffee in a mixture of about half coffee and half milk. Cheeses are widely used in cookery and are eaten with bread.

Meat dishes usually consist of either chicken baked with oil or in tomato sauce, beef and veal formed into meat balls, meat loaf, stews, cutlets and chops. Cold cuts include salami, mortadella, coppa (peppered sausage) and proscuitto (cured ham). Many kinds of fish are used and either fried, broiled or baked.

Vegetables are usually cooked in water, drained and seasoned with oil or oil and vinegar. Insalada is a salad prepared from a combination of vegetables seasoned with a dressing of olive oil, vinegar, garlic, salt and pepper. Tomatoes are used in sauces either whole or as paste, or they are pureéd.

Bread is present at every Italian meal and is usually white and crusty. A basic item in the Italian food pattern is pasta. The term is used for all the wheat products made into various shapes and forms such as spaghetti, macaroni, and egg noodles. Pasta is served in many ways, Spaghetti is commonly used with a characteristic tomato sauce and cheese or with added meat balls. Special dishes of pasta of various kinds filled with meat mixtures are ravioli, lasagna, manicotti, tortellini, and canneloni. A dry red or white wine is often served with the main meal.

Soups are usually thick and may serve as the main course for lighter meals.

Herbs present in most Italian kitchens are oregano, rosemary, basil , saffron, parsley, nutmeg. Garlic, wine, olive oil and tomato pureé are needed for many dishes. The basic process of Italian food preparation involves browning of spices in the oil then adding the meat or fish and eventually the tomato pureé, wine or other liquid and simmering slowly for several hours.

THE JEWISH DIETARY PATTERN

Adherance to Jewish dietary food laws varies among three basic groups within Judaism :-

The Orthodox - strict observance;

The Conservative - nominal observance;

The Reform - less ceremonial emphasis and minimal observance of the general dietary laws.

This body of Jewish Dietary Laws is called the rules of Kashruth. It has caused religion to enter the kitchen and accompanies the family to the table. In the traditional Jewish home the preparation of an attractive meal which is also nutrious is desirable, but this is not sufficient. With the observance of the laws of Kashruth, the preparation of food rises above its ordinary utilitarian purpose.

The basic laws relating to food come under two headings: kosher food and treife or terefah. Kosher food is that which is fit to be eaten in accordance with Jewish law or the selection and preparation of foods for human consumption

in accordance with traditional Jewish ritual, as, for example, in the slaughter of animals and dietary laws. The word "Kosher" has come to mean "ritually proper". Treife or terefah originally meant "torn by a beast of prey" and referred to food mauled by wild animals, but is now applied to all food forbidden by the Jewish laws or simply "non-kosher".

Only cattle or beasts with the following characteristics may be eaten: a divided hoof which must be wholly cloven-footed, such as sheep, goats, oxen and deer. They must also chew the cud. Deer is technically permitted but hard to come by, as it would mean that a healthy animal would have to be captured unharmed in order to be ritually slaughtered. The complete list of permitted animals is in Deuteronomy 14, 4 and 5. Unclean animals are to be noted in verse 7 of the same chapter, and these include the camel, hare and pig.

Also forbidden are those parts of unclean animals burnt on the altar when sacrifices were offered, namely the fat covering kidneys and stomach. This fat must be removed by a process known as porging.

When Jacob and the Angel wrestled, the Angel touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew of the hip (Genesis 32), and for this reason the Jews do not eat the sinew of

an animal's hip. The sinew of the hip must, therefore, be removed from the hindquarters of cattle before they can be eaten.

Eating the blood of birds and beasts is forbidden "for it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is the life thereof" (Leviticus 17, 14). To make certain that the blood is removed the meat is made kosher. It is not enough that birds and beasts should belong to the right species, they must also become kosher. For this they must be correctly and properly slaughtered, examined to eliminate diseased animals, have forbidden parts removed and also be free of blood. The first of these three processes is done by a shochet who is trained in the laws of kashruth and has been examined by a Rabbinic authority, and is an expert in the process of shechita and a man of upright character. Before taking the life of a bird or beast, he first pronounces a prayer. The main object of shechita is to spare the animal pain. The shochet must have a razor-sharp knife. If any part of the carcass is found to be diseased, it is declared terefah and cannot be eaten.

The actual preparation of what is popularly known as koshering or the elimination of the prohibited blood is today easy, and there are many reliable butchers who will take care of this process. There are also frozen meats and poultry which have been dealt with in accordance with

the rules of kashruth. Meat may not be put into soak whilst it is in the frozen state. It should be allowed to thaw first. On no account should it be put in front of the fire to induce thawing, or be put in hot water. Where the services of a kosher butcher are not available, "home koshering" has to be done. The meat must first be soaked in cold water in a utensil which is set apart for this purpose only. It is then drained, rinsed and sprinkled with salt. Then the meat should be placed on a perforated, slanting draining board and left for one hour to allow the blood to flow easily and drain off.

There are exceptions to the kosher rule. Meat which is to be grilled over an open fire or flame does not require to be salted. The grilling process allows the free flow of blood from mean thus prepared. The blood which flows off is not kosher. The Kashruth rules do not require that liver should be salted and soaked. It must be fairly deeply scored in two directions to allow the blood to flow and then very lightly grilled on both sides until it changes colour and has lost its blood. It can then be fried or cooked in any other manner desired if further cooking is required. The rule applies to all kinds of liver, including poultry liver. Hearts of animals and poultry must be cut open, veins removed and the bood permitted to flow freely before soaking and salting.

Clean and unclean birds are not stated in the Torah (the five books of Moses) but are found in the Talmud (a collection of writings including law and legend). After the Bible, it is the most important spiritual document of the Jewish people. Unclean birds which are birds of prey are mentioned in Leviticus 11, 13-19. Scavengers are forbidden. Clean birds include the hen, goose and Turkey. However, the allowed birds must be slaughtered by the shochet and be koshered by soaking and salting. The neck vein must be removed and the claws and feet must be discarded.

Only fish that have scales and fins "in their natural state" are permitted, but these do not require to be koshered, nor is any special preparation required for their cooking. Eels, whales and seal are forbidden (Leviticus 11, 9).

Also forbidden is the milk of unclean animals and the eggs of unclean birds. However, eggs of even clean birds, if they have the slightest speck of blood, must not be eaten. Should an egg be found inside poultry, it must be salted separately in the same manner as meat.

The roe and oil of unclean fish are not permitted and this includes caviar.

Insects must not be eaten, although four kinds of locusts are permitted; but since it is not known which kind of

locust is referred to in the Torah, all locusts are forbidden. "Every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth shall be an abomination" (Leviticus 11, 41). This prohibition includes crab, lobster, snails and oysters. Honey, however, is allowed since it contains no part of the insect.

Milk and meat are not eaten together and this stems from the law: "Thou shall not seethe a kid in its mother's milk" stated three times in the Torah (Exodus 23, 19 and 34, 26; and Deuteronomy 14, 21). From this injunction the whole practice of the separation of milk and meat products has arisen. One reason given for the prohibition is that kid cooked in its mother's milk was used in ancient idolatrous rites. Also a revulsion against the inhumanity of this act is given as a reason. This method of separation means that no meat or milk or milk derivative may be eaten together or even cooked together. Nor may milk and meat be prepared for the same meal at table. It is forbidden to make milk bread in Jewish homes, unless it is made quite distinct in form: i.e. very firm rolls in fancy shapes. This is to preclude any of the milk bread being accidentally eaten with meat.

The terms used to distinguish the two types of food stem from the German and are "milchig" (milk) and "fleischig" (meat). Utensils, crockery, china, cutlery, pots, pans,

containers used for milk and meat dishes must be stored separately, washed and dried separately, not even the same towel being used. There must be a time pause after eating "fleischig" foods and before "milchig" foods may be taken. This time varies depending on local custom and family, from one to nine hours when milk dishes follow meat, then the mouth must be cleaned by washing between courses, and a hard substance such as bread be eaten.

Foods which are neither milk nor meat are called pareve (neutral) and may be eaten at any time or with any meal. Fish may be eaten with meat provided it has not been cooked in butter or milk. But meat and fish should not be cooked together nor served on the same plate. As fish is a pareve dish, it should be served before the meat course or the milk dish. Eggs may be used with either milk foods or with meat.

Pungent things such as onions, radish, horseradish and pickles, must not be cut with a meat knife when they are to be used as ingredients for milk dishes or the other way about. All vegetables and purely vegetable and mineral products are pareve and do not require to be separated from anything.

Cheeses, hard or processed, can be guaranteed as kosher only if a rabbinical authority recognises them as kosher

since many cheeses are made with a rennet which may be a non-kosher meat product. Most cheeses on the local (Cape Town) market are kosher.

Fruit and vegetables are permitted if prepared in water and/or with a sugar solution. Dried fruits must be examined to make sure there are no lurking insects and they are free of maggots.

All canned, frozen foods and other commercially prepared items should carry a recognised rabbinical seal indicating that they are kosher.

JEWISH FESTIVALS AND RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

Among the Jewish people a number of special feast or fast days commemorate significant events in their history and are means of teaching cherished beliefs and tradition to the children.

Rosh Hashanah (The Day of Judgment and the Jewish New Year)

This feast occurs in September or October and begins the Hebrew calendar of holidays. On these most important days communion is sought with God through solemnity. All

living creatures now pass before God, to be judged according to their deeds of the past year. The festival is particularly devoted to prayers for peace and prosperity for all mankind, as well as for the life and happiness of individuals.

On the Jewish New Year's Day it is customary to serve apple slices dipped in honey, to signify the sweetness of the past year and hope for the future. Dishes made primarily of these two ingredients figure at meals. Carrots also have an important place among the traditional foods for Rosh Hashanah, because they are sweet, and because the Yiddish word for carrot - merin - means to increase or multiply. Being golden and shaped like coins, carrot tzimmes fulfil a further function as symbols of prosperity. No bitter or sour foods are to be served throughout this holiday.

The challoh (bread) for Rosh Hashanah is sweet and baked in round loaves, as an expression of a wish for a sweet New Year, also to signify the circle of fate and life without end.

The period beginning with the first days of Rosh Hashanah and ending with Yom Kippur is known as the "Ten Days of Penitence", during which is expected that all will observe high standards of ethical and ceremonial conduct.

Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)

On the Eve of the Day of Atonement, tradition prescribes substantial meals, since fasting is to be continuous for 24 hours from sundown to sundown. Practical considerations also demand that all food served must be sufficiently bland to prevent undue thirst. This final meal, preparatory to the fast and eaten before sundown, is marked by a combination of joy and solemnity.

Yom Kippur is the most solemn of all Jewish holidays. It maks a time not only for repentance for infringements of ceremonial law, but especially for trespasses committed in contravention of ethical standards and in personal relations. During the 24 hours of fasting, all sensual pleasures are forbidden.

To break the fast, Sabbath and other holiday food is served. This usually includes Gefüllte Fish (stuffed herring), Kreplach (small stuffed dumplings similar to Ravioli), tzimmes, highly spiced meats and pickles, and very often Sesame Biscuits and/or Strudel.

Sukkoth (Feast of the Tabernacles, Harvest festival)

This seven-day period of feasting coming five days after Yom Kippur, fulfils the dual function of marking the

gathering-in of the late harvest preparatory to winter and commemorating God's protection of the Children of Israel during their sojourn in the wilderness (Leviticus 23). At this season a succa of greenery is traditionally erected in each vineyard, but in less rural invironments orthodox Jews build a rustic cabin in their gardens, constructing it loosely so that the stars may shine through. Here they eat throughout the holiday week. It is a tabernacle signifying the Jewish wanderings and a haven of refuge from adversity. Fruit and vegetables hang from the roof, and a branch of palm, three myrtle boughs, two willow branches and a citron are incorporated in its roof and also play a part in the religious ceremonial of the festival.

Fruit and vegetable dishes are important during the week. Fluden (layered pudding) are a particular feature on the last day of the Sukkoth week (Simhath Torah), and these pressed cakes of fruit come to the table decorated with white flowers, as a symbol of Torah's purity, since on this day the first and the last chapters of the holy book are read. An important dish on this day is holishkes (stuffed cabbage leaves) and special strudels filled with many dried fruits are also served.

Chanukah (The Festival of Courage, Feast of Lights)

This period of feasting celebrates the victory of the Maccabees led by Judas Maccabees in 165 B.C. when the Temple in Jerusalem was saved from Antiochus of Syria. More particularly, it recalls the cleansing and rededication of the Temple after defilement. One drop of holy oil was found with which to rekindle the Eternal Light, and this lasted a full eight days until more could be obtained. This miraculous preservation of light from such an infintisimal source symbolizes the survival of the Jewish nation in the face of overwhelming persecution.

In Jewish homes the Chanukah menorah (a candelabrum with eight branches) stands on the sideboard. Candles are lit one by one, a night at a time, from a master candle, to signify the eight days during which the tiny of oil burned for the Maccabees.

Though there are no main dishes associated with Chanukah, it is customary to serve all forms of fritters and pancakes, since their method of preparation recalls the oil found in the Temple. These pancakes usually take the form of potato latkes in South Africa, while Jews in Israel delight in soofganiyot, dough balls deep fried and dipped in honey.

This festival has a special appeal to children: it is a season of gifts and parties.

Purim (The Feast of Esther)

Haman - Chief Minister to the Persian King Ahasuerus - determined to destroy "all Jews that were throughout the kingdom" (Esther 3,6), cast lots (purim) to find out which day and month would favour his plot. They coinci-ded with the thirteenth day of the second month of Adar (the beginning of Spring). Haman went to the king to complain that the Jews had kept their own religious practices and that they did not keep the king's laws. This was untrue since it was the strict law of Judaism that the civil law of the country in which Jews lived was binding upon them.

Haman offered his royal master a large bribe and the king told his Minister that he might do as he willed with the Jews. Wherever the king's fateful message was announced "there was great mourning among the Jews and fasting and weeping" (Esther 4, 3).

Mordecai (the Jewish leader and guardian of Haman's cousin, the Queen Esther of Persia) sent a message to Esther informing her of the decree and asked her to intercede with the king to save her people. Esther, who was frightened of her royal spouse, nevertheless promised that she would do all she could to help. At a banquet arranged by Esther, the king (who had been reminded that Mordecai was his friend and had saved his life) ordered that Haman should array

Mordecai, his enemy, in splendid apparel, and, as Mordecai rode through the streets of Shuskan, the capital, Haman should proclaim: "Thus shall be done unto the man whom the King delighteth to honour" (Esther 5, 2).

At a second banquet Esther begged the king to give him her life and to spare her people. She then denounced Haman and his plot to destroy the Jews. The king granted his queen all she asked. Thus, the lives of the Jews of Persia were saved and it became practice for the Jews to fast on the 12th Adar in recollection of Esther's fast. So the 12th Adar became Purim.

The custom peculiar to this day takes the form of mockery directed against Haman. Since his name sounds like Mohn (poppyseed), dishes featuring this ingredient appear at Purim: Hamantaschen (H-pockets), Haman's ears, Poppyseed candy (Mohnlach) etc.

Passover (Festival of Freedom)

Passover is celebrated for eight days in April, commemorating the liberation of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. The holiday begins with a highly symbolic meal on the evening before the Passover - the Seder, at which each food eaten signifies a specific aspect of the historical deliverance, each item of the table setting has a special

significance.

Candles: Ancient symbol for enlightenment, or human consciousness growing out of prehuman darkness.

Ke'arah: the sedar plate, containing the symbolic objects used for the ceremony.

Betzah: roasted egg, symbol of an offering, the shape, without beginning or an end, signifies eternal redemption and liberation of all mankind.

Zeroa: roasted lamb bone, symbol of the paschal lamb, sacrificed the night of Passover in the Temple.

Morar: bitter herb (grated horseradish), symbol of the bitter life of the Hebrews in bondage.

Karpas: green vegetable (parsley, lettuce or watercress) dipped in a dish of salt water and eaten as a relish; symbolizes the manner of leisurely eating enjoyed by free men in olden times.

Kharoses: mixture of chopped nuts, apples, cinnamon and wine; symbol of the mortar and clay used by the ancient Israelites in making bricks when they toiled under the Pharaoh.

Three Matzoh: Bread of poverty eaten by the afflicted Israelites - Symbol of haste in which the Israelites fled from Egypt. The dough had not leavened because they could not tarry.

- Symbol of ancient ceremonial custom. The Feast of unleavened bread.

Arba Kosos: wine goblet for each person, from which four cups of wine are drunk, symbolizing the four expressions in the Bible relating to redemption.

Cup of Elijah: Extra goblet left for Elijah, the herald of the messianic era.

Hard cooked eggs and salt water are passed to each person at the feast as an entreé to the main meal, symbolic of mourning for the destruction of the Temple. The eggs also symbolize Life, the perpetuation of existence.

Shavuot (Pentecost: Festival of the First Fruits, Festival of the Torah)

Shavuot is primarily an agricultural feast (in Israel) marking the beginning of the corn harvest, in the line with the passage in the Book of Exodus 23, 16, when the Israelites were enjoined to keep the first fruits of their labourers which they had sown in the field. On this day,

therefore, specimens of early crops are offered to God in token that all growing things belong to Him, and synagogues and homes are decorated with plants and flowers. The Book of Ruth is read to give a picture of the agricultural life in ancient days.

These feast days also come to commemorate the Revelation on Mount Sinai, and they are, therefore, closely connected with the Ten Commandments. Traditional food reveals this latter influence. It is customary to serve a quantity of dairy dishes, such as cheese blintzes, cheese knishes sour cream pancakes and cheesecakes. The whiteness of this type of food represents the purity of the Commandments. Another traditional reason for the consumption of dairy dishes, at this season, is that the Israeli's are said to have waited so long at the foot of Mount Sinai for the revelation of the Law, that the milk curdled, leaving only cheese for cooking.

The Sabbath

The Jewish Sabbath lasts from Sunset Friday to Sunset Saturday. The origin of the Sabbath observances remain a mystery although many writers have put down various hypotheses. The real implications of the Sabbath are enshrined in Exodus 20, 8-11:

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work ..... etc."

Thus work of every kind is prohibited including domestic tasks. This is clearly reflected in the food, which is either served cold as it has been prepared in advance, or in the form of a stew which is cooked at a very low temperature on Sabbath eve, throughout the night and the next morning to be eaten at Sabbath midday.

(c) CAPE COLOUREDS

THE CAPE COLOURED PEOPLE

The dietary habits of the Cape Coloured are essentially a mixture of the European, Malay and Indian ones. In this population group we find extremely poor and relatively well-off people which makes it difficult to describe the dietary habits and pattern. A distinct pattern can, however, be described. Amongst the poorer members (often shanty-town dwellers) "gekookte kos" seems to represent the main meal. It is a kind of bredie containing very little meat, consisting mainly of beans, pumpkin and other starchy vegetables. White bread, pilchards are often mentioned as lunch-time meals. Breakfast is often skipped or consists of either mealie-meal porridge or porridge, and tea with condensed milk. Fresh milk cannot be stored for any length of time and the coloured people have not developed a liking for sour milk or amasi, as the Africans call it. The fruit intake is extremely low. Fruit are bought sometimes at cafes and stalls and are usually eaten straightaway.

Amongst the better-off Coloureds, bredies play a vital role. The most popular bredies are pumpkin, tomato, cabbage, carrot bredie and in early spring time waterblommetjie bredie. Once a week fried fish and chips are eaten (also a common lunch-time snack bought at cafes) and curry

and rice, frikkadels and bobotie are also popular.

The breakfast eating pattern varies considerably but usually a porridge is eaten with milk and large amounts of sugar, (the Coloured share a sweet tooth with the Afrikaners) or a sandwich with jam, peanutbutter, cheese or polony. The eating pattern on Sundays is completely different. Often, as with the Malays, koeksisters are eaten early in the morning with tea or coffee. Breakfast at about 10 am consists of fried egg and bacon, toast. At lunchtime a roast chiecken with roast potatoes, peas and carrots is a common feature. This may be followed by a pudding. Salads are not at all popular except for beetroot salad or lettuce in some cases. If a pot roast (beef) is served on Sundays it is usually accompanied by roast sweet potatoes. Cakes and biscuits are served with coffee/tea in the evening.

The Christmas dinner is usually a very big meal ("the whole family comes together") consisting of a number of roasts: turkey, leg of lamb with mince sauce, depending on whether it can be afforded. Trifle and Christmas pudding with custard are rarely absent.

In the afternoon cakes, sweets, nuts and raisins are served to visitors.

(b) BANTU (XHOSA)

THE BANTU (XHOSA)

Here are some generalizations about the diet of the Xhosa in greater Cape Town. Dietary habits of the urban Xhosa are, in general, determined by the degree of westernization of the family and individuals. It is, therefore, very important for the dietitian to understand traditional dietary habits of the rural Transkeian people in order to be able to manage patients with diabetes, obesity, undernutrition, renal disease and other metabolic conditions properly.

Samp is the staple food of the urban Xhosa. Traditionally mealie meal has never been a staple food of the Xhosa. Originally the Xhosa were hunters and herders of cattle - they were more completely pastoralized than any other South Bantu tribe. Later, however, when they were confined to smaller and smaller areas, they came to rely more and more on mealies and other cereals, so that samp mealies and beans came to be eaten. Traditionally, samp (whole maize grain stamped with a stamping block into small white kernels) is cooked in one way only - boiling - although it may be reheated several times. It may be prepared by adding tomato paste or sauce; by adding meat or offal; by adding spices, herbs and fat. In order to be properly

cooked, samp requires at least 2½ hours of slow boiling. For this reason many bachelors and some families cook enough samp to last for several days. It then only requires reheating - some women claim that the more often it is reheated the better the taste.

Occasionally a maize meal porridge is prepared and this is eaten with any of a number of side dishes:

a meat relish
a boiled vegetable (mushy consistency)
spinaches, the wild or commercial one
a meat and vegetable stew
a bean stew
and very rarely a fish stew
"amasi" (milk soured and curdled in a bottle calabash).

Two women interviewed told me that they used a canned meat preparation as a side dish because the family preferred the taste to the one of fresh meat.

Fresh meat is usually bought on a daily basis at the township butcher. Very few families can afford meat more often than once or twice a week and the meat is generally eaten on Sundays in the form of a roast or stew. Popular meat cuts are beef brisket and mutton flank; tripe, sausages and "boerewors" were eaten by many families. Chickens were only eaten on Sundays, and generally bought alive and

fattened for a few days. The Xhosa are extremely fond of fat meat cuts.

The acceptance of fish varies tremendously. The main form in which fish is consumed is as "fish and chips" which is popular with the children and adults working "in town". Tinned pilchards are popular as a tea-time or lunchtime dish among working men and are usually eaten with white bread.

Milk is an extremely popular item. "One who did not drink milk when young" is considered a poor specimen of man. There is the attitude that "nowadays people get old quickly because they did not get enough milk in their youth". The consumption of milk is, however, restricted since poverty makes milk an expensive commodity. (The average urban family lives below the poverty datum line).

Fresh milk is bought to be used in tea and coffee. For drinking amasi is more popular. It can be bought from the dairy or soured at home. Sweetened condensed milk is very popular with the poorer families since it is easier to store. Skim-milk powder is considered inferior. People were not aware of the fact that it could be purchased cheaply.

Fresh vegetables are considered a luxury by urban blacks. They are included in the main meal on weekends by many

families and bachelors. Traditional vegetables grown in the Transkei are beans, pumpkins, cabbages; cauliflowers, tomatoes and peas are grown occasionally. Many different kins of melons are grown. The tips of the growing tendril of any of the curcubit family and a small green melon are well liked by the Transkeians.

Among the urban Africans, cabbage is the most widely consumed vegetable. Unfortunately the leaves are cooked to a tasteless brown pulp in order that the smooth texture of the wild spinach be obtained. Cauliflower leaves are also very popular, but the tops are occasionally eaten. Onion, pumpkins, sweet potatoes and squash are the most popular vegetables. Potatoes are included in Sunday lunches exclusively. Dried beans are used in every family eating samp, with which they are cooked in the proportion of one-third beans to two-thirds samp. Split peas and lentils are occasionally used in soups.

Various types of wild leaves are picked by Xhosa women and cooked as a side-dish to the mealie meal porridge. Wild leaves are called imfino by the Xhosa. The following are typical plants which may be picked if available.

The common "Pigweed" (Amaranthus sp.)
The common "Black Jack" (Bideus pilosa)
The "Kanniedood" (Portulaca oleracea)

The "Galbessie" or "Nightshade" weed (Solanum nigrum) which bears black berries.

The "Hondebossie" or "Lambs quarters" (Chenopodium sp.)

The "Cape Gooseberry" (Physalis peruviana)

The "Sow Thistle" (Sonchus Oleraceus) which has a very bitter taste.

The "Wild Cucumber" which is a creeper with a yellow fruit (Curcubita sp.)

The "Nettle" (Urtica sp.)

The "cow pea" (Virginia sinensis)

Pumpkin tops (Curcubita sp.)

and the wild spinach is not so much relished by urban Xhosa.

To the Xhosa fruit are a snack. Fruit is eaten only when in season and it is bought from hawkers. Tinned fruit is sometimes consumed on Sundays.

DAILY MEAL PATTERN

For most families the day starts very early. Men often leave the house with only having taken a cup of coffee

with large amounts of sugar. If breakfast is eaten it may vary from a European-type one to one consisting of a thin maize-meal porridge taken with milk and sugar.

During the day men buy their lunch at cafes or other stores. Usually the midmorning and/or lunch meal consists of :

Bread and soup
Bread and pilchards
Bread and roast meat prepared on an open fire by many construction workers
Fish and chips.

Children have bread and some soup or they buy sweets, hard-boiled eggs, chips, etc. from harkers or shops. Women say they often eat bread or go without any food during the day.

The main meal is taken in the evening. Usually it consists of samp and beans served with meat, tomato paste or cooking fat. On rare evenings maize-meal dishes are eaten. The Sunday main meal usually consists of potatoes, rice, vegetables, meat and a dessert, if families can afford it. The dessert may be a custard, canned fruit and jelly. Dumplings or "scones" may be served with tea on Sundays. The typical diet of a well-off

family has been given by E.B. Manning et al. "In this particular family quoted the father is a university lecturer. The day starts with early tea for the adults and Milo for the children. This is followed by a breakfast consisting of porridge with milk and sugar. Wholewheat or white bread with butter and peanut butter or jam always appear on the table, and occasionally eggs are eaten. Snacks are always available for family members at home in the middle of the day and these usually comprise sandwiches made with French Polony, cheese and tomato, fish paste or ham-spread. Occasionally fish and chips or fried eggs are served together with bread. Tea or coffee is drunk at midday. Meat is always served at the evening meal. During the week under discussion the following vegetable combinations were served together with the meat:

Samp, beans and potatoes;
Rice, carrots and cabbage;
Rice, pumpkin and sweet potatoes or homemade dumplings.

The meal is always ended with tea or coffee. Tea and homemade cake were usually provided at midmorning, and tea, coffee and soft drinks in the afternoon for any members of the family who happened to be at home. The meal pattern on Sunday is totally different from that observed during the rest of the week ... " etc.

TABOOS

Milk: Milk was originally considered food for children only. Men did originally not touch milk and women were only allowed to drink milk in their own kraal and that of relations. Eggs used to be taboo for women at any age between puberty and menopause. Neither were egg products permitted. Men on the other hand, could increase their virility by eating eggs.

Various vegetables were considered women's food but this is no longer the case in most families.

Animals killed for feasts and sacrifices are divided up according to a strict ritual - the right side for the men and the left for women. Each part of the animal possesses a particular quality and is designated for a particular person. Feasts are usually sporadic, being held at weddings, coming-of-age parties, funerals and for the appeasement of ancestral spirits. There is no particular taboo for fish amongst the Xhosa. Once they have become accustomed to its taste it is well-liked.

(d) INDIAN (MUSLIM AND HINDU

HINDU

Three of the most significant and widely-held concepts of Hindu religion are Samsāra, the transmigration of souls; karma, the law of just deserts; and dharma, the Hindu's sacred duty to follow the rules of god and righteous behaviour. The Hindu views his life as merely the current of an extended series of incarnations, some of which have preceded it, with others to follow. The human sould may be reborn into a human or into some other living thing, according to the law of karma, by which good and bad feelings, thoughts, and acts in previous incarnations determine one's present worldly status and condition. An individual may improve his ritual status in his next incarnation by following three meritorious paths, including "the path of sacrifice" which requires strict adherance to the dharma of the social groups to which he belongs.

The three major attributes of dharma are truth, beauty, and purity; a thought, act, object, or human being is in accord with dharma if it is true, beautiful, but above all, pure. Since purity is of such special importance, the

Hindu makes a serious effort to keep his state of purity intact and to cleanse himself of impurity (pollution). This concern with impurity is so pronounced and pervasive that various people speak of a "Hindu pollution concept" which is essential for an understanding of how individuals and groups, of whatever sort, are ranked in ritual status. Unlike secular status, which is based on such considerations as ability, education, wealth and ownership of land, ritual status derives from the relative purity of the individual group. The pure individual must constantly be on guard, for by contact with an impure person, it is the pure who becomes polluted, not the impure one who is purified. Whatever personal purity a man may achieve through individual efforts, in one lifetime he cannot eliminate the ritual status of his natal group unless he renounces group life.

Pollution, for the Hindu, may be "permanent" or "temporary." Temporary pollution can be removed by purification ceremonies, but, if not removed may become permanent. Much permanent pollution, however, is an inherited condition, as of human groups, parts of the human body, human emissions, plants and animals, and material objects. For human groups it is the differences in permanent pollution that establish their relationships with one another, whether they may intermarry, whether they may eat together, whether they may eat one another's food, and so forth. With

respect to the parts of the human body, those below the navel are generally more polluted than those above it. However, human emissions, whether faeces, mucouses, semen or spittle, or of some other sort, are polluting, regardless of where they originate in the body. As to plants and animals, some, such as sweet basil (Ovum Sanctum), the cow, cobra and certain monkeys, have a high level of purity; others do not. Among material objects, gold in high in ritual purity, and silver, copper, iron and earthenware are less so.

Permanent and temporary pollution of humans may be devided further into "voluntary" and "involuntary" pollution. Voluntary pollution is brought on by human acts, whether of commission or omission, that relate to ritual avoidance. Involuntary pollution, by contrast, is brought on by the forces of nature and not by polluted individuals themselves; among the forms of involuntary pollution are those arising from birth, sickness, or death in the family. Finally, there is "external" (touch) and "internal" (penetration of polluting substances) pollution.

Temporary pollution of humans, or that of places or objects, may be removed by performing various acts or ceremonies, and by cleansing with purificatory agents. The most important of those for the dietitian are the "five products of the cow".

Cow's milk and its products, symbols of abundance and fertility, have been among the ceremonial offerings to the gods of India since earliest Vedic times (after about 1500 B.C.). The subsequent development of the sacred cow concept* seems to have enhanced the position of cows' milk and products in ceremony. Of importance to us are not, however, the ceremonial uses as such, but those non-ceremonial uses insofar as they demonstrate the purificatory role of the sacred cow's milk and milk products.

At "autumn full moon", a condensed milk (Kheer) of cow's milk and sugar is prepared; the kheer is then exposed to the rays of the moon for five to six hours, which sanctifies it as amvita (nectar). The kheer is then carried in a covered vessel into the shrine and, with prayer, offered to the deities Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. The cover is then removed and the kheer is then distributed to the worshippers, and these are blessed on eating it. It is also believed that this holy kheer is a specific against asthma, especially if consumed on the day of preparation.

Another example of the purificatory role of the dairy products of the cow is found in their widespread use, especially of milk and ghee in cleansing things, namely in removing ritual impurity. Thus the images of deities

* Will be discussed later on.

are washed or annointed with cow's milk, curd, ghee, or with a mixture consisting of cow's milk, butter, ghee, honey and sugar.

Milk is always considered a pure fluid. There is much controversy as to whether milk from the "untouchables" or people with other religions may be accepted. Every Hindu, however, will refuse milk if he had any suspicion that it had been mixed with water.

The purificatory role of cow's milk is clearly evident in Hindu patterns of accepting or refusing foods according to who cooks them and how they are prepared. Hindus regard raw foods as possessing the greatest purity, and even Brahmins will accept uncooked grain and other raw foods that have been handled by , or purchased from anyone or almost anyone, including commonly even members of Untouchable castes. Of all raw foods, fruits and vegetables that can be washed and peeled, and nuts protected by a husk or shell, are regarded as the most difficult to pollute, but even they may be refused if their coverings are broken or cut.

In cooking, raw food is altered ritually, and the Hindu may refuse to eat it if prepared or touched by a person of lower caste, or of different caste. Refusal of cooked food may originate from concern that the food has become spiritually infected by the mana of the cook. Others

suggest a Hindu "fear of actual contact with physically polluting substances", presumably transmitted from cook to utensils to food. Whatever its derivation, this refusal has led to some interesting customs. One is the preference for Brahmin cooks. For food prepared by them enjoys the broadest acceptability among Hindus. By having a cook of suitable caste, a host can feed a man of high caste even if he himself is of low caste status. Brahmins cooks are also employed in jails in India to avoid offending caste sensitivities. It is not that a Brahmin cook imparts the purity of his caste to the food he prepared, but that, because of the high ritual status of his caste, he would be expected to pollute it less than would members of lower caste. The cook, on his part, "suffers no ritual hurt" even if the lowliest of people eat food he has prepared.

Most Hindus, however, do not regard all cooked foods as equally suspect. They often distinguish between inferior-cooked or kachcha foods and superior or pakka ones. Kachcha foods, which usually are prepared with water or water and salt but not with ghee or butter, include some of the mainstays of the Hindu diet, such as boiled rice or pulses as well as dry-baked flatbread. Among the ingredients of most pakka foods, by contrast, are milk products, usually ghee, or vegetable oil. That the use of vegetable oil should make a food pakka is presumably

an extension of attitudes regarding the purity of ghee. In any case, the superior status of pakka foods made with ghee or other dairy products is based on their derivation from the sacred cow. The sacredness of the cow, imparted through its products, thus acts to counter pollutants, and to increase the acceptability of these pakka foods. The use of milk products in preparing food does not, of course, make unacceptable foods such as beef, acceptable. Parched grains, even though prepared without dairy products, are also pakka. This derives from the exposure of grains to fire, another powerful purificant. Parched grains play an important role as snacks that are widely acceptable in social situations that involve intercaste participation.

Hindu food can thus be graded according to purity from the most pure, i.e. milk, butter, ghee, and other dairy products, raw fruit, vegetables and nuts, which may be interchanged freely among members from the different castes to the most pollutable foods, the kachcha foods, which may not be accepted from anyone from a different caste. Pakka foods have a controversial position, some Hindus accept these from people belonging to other castes, others do not.

Finally, I have to mention the two products of the cow which do not play a nutritional role but are important in understanding Hindu rites - these two products are

cow dung and urine. Both have important bactericidal and other medical qualities for the Hindu in India. Cow dung is used to clean living quarters of a house, household places where religious rites are carried out, kitchen utensils, in fact it is applied to any surface area requiring cleansing and purification. Cow's urine is also used in many ways to cleanse polluted objects. Cow dung and urine may be taken internally, too, for purposes of purification.

"THE SACRED COW"

"The central fact of Hinduism is cow protection. Cow protection to me is one of the most wonderful phenomena in human evolution. The cow to me means the entire subhuman world. Man through the cow is enjoined to realize his identity with all that lives. ...
The motive that actuates cow protection is not purely selfish, though selfish consideration undoubtedly enters into it. If it were purely selfish, the cow would be killed as in other countries, after it had ceased to give full use. .....
The cow protection ideal set up by Hinduism is essentially different from and transcedes the dairy ideal of the West. The latter is based on economic values, the former, while duly recognizing the economic aspect of the case, lays stress on the spiritual aspect, namely, the idea of penance

and self-sacrifice for the relief of martyred innocence which it embodies. Under a dairy ideal means do not count, even cow slaughter is resorted to for ensuring cheap milk supply and getting rid of what are supposed to be uneconomic superfluous cattle. Under the religion ideal, means are the principal thing - in fact everything. The essence of cow protection according to Hinduism thus does not lie in the mechanical act of "saving the animal per se, but in the self-purification and penance behind the act."

M.K. Ghandi (1954).

The first detailed picture of the role cattle played in Indian religion, is in the Vedic accounts which look back to approximately 1500 to 500 B.C. In those accounts bulls were identified with various male deities; but despite this identification, cattle were sacrificed and eaten freely. Though there were objections, even during those times, to slaughtering certain cattle, the cow was not sacred, even for member of the priestly caste, the Brahmins. It was some time close to the beginning of the Christian era that the doctrine of special sanctity of the cow was first recorded, and gradually after that time it became firmly established. Why this development took place remains a mystery. The least plausible of several suggestions is that Indians renounced the eating of beef, along with all other meat, as a health measure,

either because meat decomposes rapidly in a warm climate and is readily subject to external infection by flies and other insects, or because in a hot climate the organs of the human stomach are so weakened that beef cannot be digested.

Another suggestion is that the final abandonment of beef eating derives from the Buddhist - Brahman struggle for supremacy in India. This suggestion seems to fit many of the known facts: that the Brahman as priests sacrificed cattle; that Buddhists objected to animal slaughter and to the cattle sacrifice of the Brahmans; that the penalties for cattle slaughter became more severe in the early centuries of the Christian era, a time of struggle between Brahmans and Buddhists; that in India today the rules against beef eating are observed more rigidly by Brahmans and upper-caste groups than by the untouchables; and that certain low castes in trying to raise their status have given up eating beef in an imitation of the Brahmans and upper-caste Hindus.

However unsatisfactory it may be, the most likely hypothesis suggested by the evidence is that some Indian groups had feelings against cattle slaughter and beef eating that derived from the sacred character of cattle.

FASTING IN HINDUISM

Rules and times for fasting in Hinduism have been laid down by members of the priestly caste - the Brahmans. Hindus belonging to other castes follow the rules to a variable degree.

Old age, infirmity or sickness, unless very serious does not exempt the Hindu from fasting. Ordinary Brahmans usually take two meals a day, one after midday and one on going to bed. There are many days on which he is allowed only one meal, on others he has to fast completely.

Brahmans and in fact all Hindus are required to fast on the days of full and new moon and on the tenth, eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth day of every lunar month. On the 10th day only one meal may be eaten without vegetables. No salt may be used and food may only be seasoned with a small quantity of melted butter. The food must be eaten quickly. The 11th day has been specially set apart for the worship of Vishnu. The following is the sentence of life and death which Vishnu pronounced:

> "I repeat - because I cannot say it too often: Do not eat rice on that day, whoever you are, be your position and condition what they may, do not eat rice."

This is a total fast day. On the 12th day only one meal may be eaten. The 13th day is considered an unlucky day. Brahmans must eat nothing until sunset.

On the 14th day of the moon in the month of Maga (February) no one may eat or drink or sleep for the entire twenty-four hours.

The 9th day of the lunar month Cheitra (April), the aniversary of the incarnation of the great god Vishnu in the person of Rama, Brahmans may only take one meal and that must be without rice. Peas, bananas, cocnuts and cakes should be eaten in some way.

Hindus are required to fast completely on the 8th day of the lunar month Sravana (August), the day of Vishnu's incarnation in the person of Krishna.

Hindus also fast on the ten Avatars (incarnations) of Vishnu; on the days of eclipses; at the equinoxes, solstices and the conjunctions of planets; on the aniversary of the death of father or mother; on Sundays and on several other days during the year.

HINDU FEASTS

On feast days Hindus must invite friends and relations and feast each other in turns. There are 18 obligatory Hindu feasts in the year, only the principal ones will be mentioned.

A feast is held on the first day of the year - Vgadi -

which falls on the day of new moon in March. Hindus pay each other visits and celebrate with fireworks, shots, etc. Another feast beginning on new moon in February - Siva vatri - lasts for three days. The festival of Gauss, starting with new moon in September lasts many days. This festival is dedicated to the wife of Siva and to the household gods, which are represented by the implements, tools and utensils in common use by the people. On New Moon in October, the feast of Maha - navami or Dasara is held in special dedication to the memory of the ancestors. Sacrifices are offered to deceased ancestors by each family. This feast lasts nine days. It is also the special festival of universities, schools and soldiers.

In November/December, the feast of the lamps is celebrated (Depavali or Diwvali). Every evening lighted lamps are placed at the doors of houses and candles are lit inside the houses. Food cooked resembles that eaten on partial fast days. No meat is eaten at all - thus on fast days even non-vegetarian Hindus become vegetarian. This feast is specially dedicated to fire, one of the most powerful purificants in Hindu rites.

Nagara - panchami is celebrated in the beginning of February in honour of the snakes, especially of the cobra (naga or nagara

Pongul is the most solemn of all feasts. The preceeding month was made up entirely of unlucky days. These

need to be forgotten during a three day feast. The first day is dedicated to the people, the second to the sun, and the third to the cows. Special rice dishes are cooked on each day according to traditional rules.

On feast days Hindus are extremely gluttonous. Stomachs have to be filled. The more butter and ghee is added during food preparation, the more suitable the food, the better the god Jivattma will be pleased. Hindus, provided they can afford it, never get up from a meal until it is absolutely impossible to swallow another morsel.

To "fill one's stomach well" is a favourite expression amongst Hindus and one you often hear. Whenever people feast in another's house, the host never fails to ask his guests if their stomachs are well-filled.'

FOODS TABOO TO BRAHMANS

Hindus belonging to other castes also keep most of the Brahmanical rules concerning food, most of them only to gain respect and consideration of the public. Traditionally the Brahmans may not eat anything that has had life or has even contained the principle of life. Most Hindus avoid beef-eating, but are not complete vegetarians.

Hindus are forbidden to drink any sura pana, intoxicating

liquors.

Generally no food prepared by persons of another caste may be eaten, unless it is served raw and vegetables and fruit can be peeled, and nuts shelled. Food containing ghee, butter, milk or curd may be accepted from people belonging to other castes but need not be accepted. Any breaches of the taboos should be punished by the guru.

MUSLIMS

THE ISLAMIC ATTITUDE TOWARD FOOD

Muslims are expected to eat for survival, to maintain good health and not to live for eating. In Islam eating is considered to be a matter of worship of God like prayers, fasting, and other religious practices. A Muslim eats to maintain a strong healthy physique in order to be able to contribute his knowledge and efforts for the wellfare of society. Although fasting is a part of Islamic practices, ascetic practices are discouraged. On the other hand, self-indulgence is forbidden by the Quaran. Muslims are also supposed to obtain food of best quality nutritionally.

Every Muslim is required to work for his food and other necessities in order to take care of his own needs and those of his family. The best food is that which you earn through hard work. Members of a family and their relatives are obliged to help a poor person related to them. Help might take the form of securing work or financial or other assistance. The members of any Muslim community are also required to help the needy people among them in any way possible.

A number of foods are taboo for the Muslim. According to the Islamic Law, unlawful or taboo foods fall into two main categories: those for which the reason for abstention has been given and those for which it has not been given.

It is stated in the Quaran: Forbidden onto you for food are:

> "Carrion blood, and swine flesh, and that which has been dedicated unto any other than God; and the strangled and the dead through beating and the dead through falling from a height, and that which has been killed by horns, and the devoured of wild beast. Saving that which you make lawful (by the death stroke), and that which has been immolated unto idols; forbidden also is the division of meat by raffling with arrows, this is impiety."

If the name of God (Allah) is not mentioned on the animal during slaughtering, the meat of the animal cannot be eaten by Muslims. This injunction has been given to remind Muslims that the giving and taking of life is Allah's prerogative and that they take the life of an animal for their use as food only by Allah's permission. If the name of any individual - even a saint or a prophet - has been mentioned on an animal during slaughtering, the meat is totally forbidden as it is if the name of any deity other than Allah is mentioned on it.

Pork and its by-products are forbidden foods about which no reason has been given. According to the Quaran, it is a sin and impious to use it.

Alcoholic beverages and other intoxicants including drugs are totally prohibited to Muslims unless there is a valid reason for using them. The reasons for the prohibition of intoxicants are as follows: intoxicants hinder people from the rememberance of Allah and from proper observance of their prayers. Muslims are also asked to abstain from manufacuring, drinking, serving, selling or joining a group which serves alcoholic beverages. The same statement holds true for intoxicating drugs.

Islamic jurisprudence permits a Muslim to eat or drink prohibited foods and liquids under certain conditions. These are:

By mistake;
If one is forced to do so by others; or
Fear of dying of hunger or of disease.

To be lawful, (Halaal), animals should be slaughtered in the name of Allah. This means saying the words "Bismillahij Allahu akbar" while the animal is being killed. All seafoods and fish are, however, an exception to this statement. The animal should be slaughtered by splitting the front of the throat and allowing the blood to drain completely.

Slaughtering may be done by any person, as in Islam there is no priesthood or any special functionary for this purpose.

All fowl are lawful to Muslims. A hunter must mention the name of God immediately before shooting, and all blood must be drained for the meat to be lawful. Birds which eat their prey are not permitted as food, neither are those quadrupeds allowed which seize their prey with their teeth. Elephants, otters, crocodiles, pelicans, etc., are also forbidden.

FASTING IN ISLAM

The reason Muslim believers fast can be found directly in the Quaran, the devinely revelaed scripture of Islam, and the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad. Muslims fast to fulfill a religious obligation and to earn the pleasures of God (Allah). It has also been reported that the Prophet Muhammad said:

> "Anyone who fasts the month of Ramadan with good intentions for the pleasure of Allah, his/her sins are wiped out."

Muslims believe that the Ramadan confers great blessings. The Revelations of the Quaran started in this month, and the Quaran is considered to be a great guide to mankind.

In this month the doors of Heaven are said to be widely open while those of hell are tightly closed. The supplication of the fasting person is accepted by Allah. There is a special night in the later part of Ramadan, which is considered better than 1000 months of a person's life.

Fasting is also considered to be a training in controlling one's needs and desires, in restraining oneself from self-indulgence, and in deepening one's spiritual life. The Quaran concisely stated that fasting is prescribed for Muslims "so that they may remain conscious of God". Muslims also say they fast to improve their health. This came out clearly when in the Diabetic-Obesity clinic of the Groote Schuur Hospital we tried to tell patients that diabetics need not fast (because of the risk of hypoglycemia). Most patients stated that they "felt much better" since they started fasting.

The hunger which Muslims experience while fasting is meant to enable them to appreciate the hunger of the poor and needy.

Although there are several types of fasting in Islam, all involve the same sequential pattern, obligations, rules and regulations, and food habits. The differences are in the number of days and in whether the fast is mandatory,

superogatory or optional.

Fasting in Islam is considered to be a controlled or partial type of fasting. Muslims abstain from food, drink and coitus during the hours from dawn to sunset. They resume their normal life after sunset.

The types of fasting are:

Mandatory Fasting

Fasting during Ramadan is obligatory for every adult Muslim. Fasting in Ramadan is one of the five pillars of Islam. The other four are:

the statement of faith
prayers five times a day
poor-due
making a Pilgrimage to Mecca.

Ramadan is the 9th month of the Islamic lunar calendar, thus rotating through all seasons, since, depending on the phases of the moon, it begins eleven or twelve days earlier each successive year. This year the fast began on Friday, the 27th of August.

During the month of Ramadan, Muhammedans all over the world observe rigid daily fasting, taking no food or drink from dawn to sunset. Nights are spent in gay feasting.

Special dishes depending on the population group mark the joyous occasion.

Superogatory fasting

Muslims are requested to fast six days in Shawwal, the month following Ramadan, after enjoying the feast of fast-breaking (Eidul Fitr) during the first three days after Ramadan. According to the Quaran one good act is equal to ten. Hence a thirty day fast during Ramadan plus a six day fast in Shawwal makes thirty-six days, equal in merit to fasting 360 days.

On the 10th day in the month of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic lunar calendar, Muslims are encouraged to fast. It has been reported that on this day, Moses helped the Jews migrate from Egypt to Palestine and, therefore, they were saved from persecution and torture, for which the Prophet Muhammad encouraged Muslims to fast during this day in thankfullness to Allah.

Muslims are requested to fast on the fifteenth day of the month of Sha'ban, the eighth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, the day of atonement and repentance.

Muslims are expected to fast on the ninth day of Zul Hijjah, the twelfth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, provided

they are not on pilgrimage. This day preceeds the Feast of Sacrifice. As far as pilgrims are concerned they are not to fast the day preceeding the feast as it would be an added hardship to fulfill the spiritual rites and rituals during pilgrimage.

Recommended Fasts

The recommended fasts include all types of voluntary fasts, which may be observed any day throughout the year. It is reported that a Muslim may fast three days a month or twice weekly, prefereably on Mondays and Thursdays. On the other hand, it is not recommended that they fast for long periods except for the seventh and eighth month, Rajab and Sha'ban, preceeding Ramadan.

Muslims are forbidden to fast on the two festival days, Eidul Adha (the festival of sacrifice), as well as three days thereafter. These are considered as days of happiness and joy, as well as of thanks and appreciation to Allah, and it is recognized that fasting may involve hardship. It is undesirable for Muslims to fast continuously every day of the year and to single out Fridays.

There are occasions when a Muslim must fast as penance:

When a Muslim travels to Mecca during the Pilgrimage season, he or she may choose to perform first the minor

Pilgrimage called "Umrah" before the special days of the Major Pilgrimage known as Haji, in order to enjoy the relief during the intervening period from the prohibited acts during the Pilgrimage. Accordingly he/she must sacrifice an animal on the first day of the feast of Sacrifice. If the Pilgrim cannot affort it he/she must fast three days while still in the vicinity of Mecca and another seven days on returning home.

Whoever breaks a valid oath becomes liable to the penalty of paying the cost of feeding 10 poor persons. If a person cannot afford this, he/she must fast three days in atonement.

If a Mulsim breaks the fast of Ramadan during the day, he must atone for that day by fasting one day and, in addition, sixty consecutive days. If his physical condition does not permit him to do so, then he must give food to sixty needy people.

A number of groups are exempted from fasting especially during Ramadan:

(a) Children prior to puberty or under the age of 15.

(b) Sick people with recoverable illness may postpone their fast as long as they are ill and make up for it later, a day for a day.

(c) Travelling people may not fast, but they must make up later the number of days they have missed.

(d) Women during menstruation, i.e. six to seven days, or women during post-natal discharge, usually forty days, may under no circumstances fast, but have to make up the number of days missed afterwards.

(e) Women during pregnancy and lactation may not fast but have to make up for the missing days.

(f) Elderly people who are physically unable to fast, need not fast. However, they are recommended to give a needy person food for a full day or its value, for every day missed. (This only holds if his financial position allows him to do so).

(g) Insane person are completely exempted from fasting.

(h) Those engaged in hard physical labour, such as coal miners, etc., may not fast but must make up the days missed during vacations.

Fasting will be nullified under certain conditions. Fasting will be nullified if a person deliberately and willingly commits an act which breaks fasting. Under such circumstances the person must repeat the fast at a later time with or without penance. Some factors which nullify fast

are:

- any solid or liquid food taken intentionally.

- sexual intercourse.

- continuing to eat, drink or have sexual intercourse just after dawn, and realising that the time of fasting has already started.

- to break the fast before subset.

- intravenous or intramuscular injections of nutrients for health reasons.

- intentional vomiting.

The Feast of Sacrifice

Every year Muslims all over the world celebrate the Feast of Sacrifice, which occurs on the tenth day of the last month of the lunar calendar, Zul-Hijjah. This feast reminds Muslims of the great sacrifice of the Prophet Abraham when he was about to sacrifice his son Ishmael for the love of God. Any person who can afford to make the pilgrimage to Mecca is requested to sacrifice an animal - a sheep, goat, cow or camel - collectively with his family. This is done by the Pilgrims near Mecca after sunrise and

and immediately after the special prayers for this occasion held in the morning. Those who do not go to Mecca are supposed to make this sacrifice in their own homes, distributing most of the meat to the needy and also to their friends and relatives.

EATING HABITS OF THE MUSLIMS

Mohammedams from different countries follow widely different food customs, although these generally form a tradition among a particular group. They all have in common the feasts and fasts, but no particular fare is prescribed for these occasions.

There are a number of other factors Muslims have in common:

Muslims are advised to eat no more than two-thirds of their normal capacity, and sharing of food is recommended. It is said that the quantity of food for one person is enough for two, and that of two is enough for four, and that of four is enough for eight. Eating together is recommended, and food is not to be thrown away, wasted, or treated as contempt as it is a provision from Allah. The hands and the mouth are to be washed before and after each meal. It is traditional to send a dish of food to a neighbour whenever something good is prepared. If there are guests, the hosts are first to begin eating, and the last to finish,

and they are to care for the needs of their guests before their own. Eating and drinking start in the name of Allah and the right hand is preferred for eating. Drinking of stimulants, such as coffee and tea, is discouraged, and smoking as well - but this tradition is old and many young Muslims do drink coffee or tea, but only very few smoke.

DAILY EATING PATTERN AND TRADITIONAL FOODS OF INDIANS

The Indian's daily eating pattern varies greatly from family to family. The Hindu and the Muslim food does not differ to a large extent, except for the beef avoidance and vegetarianism of Hindus and the pork avoidance by Muslims and many Hindus.

Breakfast usually consists of either only tea and biscuits or it resembles the European type breakfast, including a cereal, a protein-containing dish. Often sweets and nuts are eaten for breakfast, especially by the vegetarian Hindus.

Lunch is rarely eaten at home. Usually sandwiches of some form are prepared in the morning and taken along to work.

The main meal is served in the evening. It usually consists of a rice dish, a meat dish and vegetables or a vegetarian or meat stew. In winter a soup is sometimes served before the main course, but never on Sundays. The main course is often followed by cakes and sweets, not so much with the Muslims, but always with the vegetarian Hindu.

No cakes prepared by Hindus contain eggs, although eggs are eaten fried for breakfast. Most Indian made cakes are fried in oil.

For the Indian rice is the main attraction on the table, other dishes are considered side dishes. Rice used should be as old as possible and old rice may be obtained in special shops. However, in many households commercial varieties are used. Before cooking rice is always soaked in water for some time, then the water is drained off and the rice fried in ghee or oil for a few minutes. Frying of the rice seals the starch in the grains, and prevents it from becoming soggy and separates each grain. Other ingredients are fried with the rice. The water in which the rice was previously soaked is used for cooking. Rice is always served tastefully garnished, either with a preparation of curd or some gravy. Sweet pullao (rice) should be made as colourful as possible by the addition of pistachios, almonds and sultanas. The rice grain may be coloured by adding a little saffron, and flavoured with ruk kewra (a flavouring obtained from the flower of a plant called kewra) and crushed green cardamon seeds.

Biryanies are very rich pullaos, containing considerable amounts of ghee. Biryany is "the dish" to serve on all best and auspicious occasions such as welcoming house guests on the first day; it is the main part of the menu in formal entertaining.

The art of Indian cookery lies in the delicacy of spicing (and not in high spicing as most of us tend to think). It is the use of selected spices in a particular manner to bring out the dormant flavours of a dish or to drown the undesirable ones which is the real art. Packaged curry powders are practically unknown to Indians. Separate spices used whole or ground into a paste impart to each dish an individual flavour and avoid the drabness and monotony produced by the ready-made powders. Each dish has its own combination of spices which no curry powder can ever hope to displace.

Common ingredients of a homemade curry powder are:

Cardamom seeds -	Elachi
Cinnamon sticks -	Darchini
Cloves -	Lavang
Black cumin seeds -	Jeera
Mace -	Javatri
Nutmeg -	Jaiphal
Pepper -	Mari

These ingredients are ground together with the help of mortar and pestle to yield the basic curry powder - garam masala - to which other spices are added depending on the dish.

Indian cookery requires ghee (clarified butter) or vegetable

oil. Animal fats are not ordinarily used for cooking in India and amongst Indians in Cape Town, but may be used since it has got the same or similar frying properties to ghee. Vegetable ghee may be prepared from margarine if ordinary ghee is not available.

Gravy

Gravy can be made in a variety of ways, the basic differences being in the nature of the spices added and the mode or manner in which they are added. The gravy in a curry is prepared by the use of certain thickening agents such as onion, ginger, garlic, cocnut, poppy seeds, coriander seeds, almonds, curd, tomatoes. They serve not only as thickening, but also as flavouring agents. In order to make the curry into a homogenous mixture, it is necessary during the process of cooking to reduce them into a puree. Therefore the onion is cut finely or passed through a grater, the ginger, garlic, coconut, etc. are ground into a paste, while the curd is beated and the tomatoes mashed before use.

The flavours of poppy seeds, coriander seeds, coconut and almonds can be enhanced by roasting lightly on a hot griddle before grinding them into a paste, whilst the juice of ginger and garlic becomes stronger if the juice is extracted and separately added to a curry rather than if it is ground along with the other ingredients.

The flavour of a curry is largely dependant upon the art of spicing. The spices for example can be added whole or ground into paste; they can be added immediately after the onion is fried (the initial step in the cooking of any curry) or at a later stage. The onion itself can be fried and added to the gravy before the meat or after the meat; it can be added raw or it can be added half-ccoked. The quantity in which it is added is also variable and the same applies to other thickening agents. Each step has its effect and different combinations are employed to impart to each curry an individual flavour.

Meat Cookery

Curry: This is a beautiful and exotic dish and is perhaps the most famous preparation in India. It is not a dish; it is a class of dishes. There are many curries with widely different tastes. Indian meat cookery is, however, not merely composed of curries, and the tandoori class of dishes* is a keen competitor. In addition to curries and the tandoori, there are the kababs, the kolfas (minced meat balls) and the chops. Kababs are a speciality of the Muslims. They are prepared either from minced or small strips of tender meat by frying or roasting over open charcoal fire. They are essentially a dry meat preparation but are occasionally converted into curry by the addition of some curd and masala. From amongst the

* baked in a tandoorie oven

kababs prepared from minced meat the seekh kabab and the shammi kabab are the most important.

Seekh kabab is perhaps the most popular of the kababs and is prepared by grilling or roasting, whereas shammi kabab is cooked by deep frying.

The meat mostly used by Indians is mutton. Chicken plays a large role in Cape Town amongst Indians of lower socio-economic standing. Fish is eaten by a number of people, but neither beef nor pork are eaten to any extent by Muslims and Hindus. They do not appreciate the flavour of beef or pork.

Meat of any kind is usually marinated in spices for a particular length of time, depending on the dish.

Indian Vegetarian Cookery

Vegetarianism is extremely common among the Hindus in Cape Town. Vegetarians cook the same vegetable in many different ways to produce a variety of different flavours. Each dish is separate in form, texture and appearance. The vegetables are either in the form of a curry or a bhujia. The latter is essentially a dry dish; a single green or leafy vegetable or a combination of two or more vegetables is cooked without the addition of water. Onion and ginger used in the preparation are sliced and not ground or grated.

Single vegetables usually cooked are finugreek leaves (methi, here only available dried, in packets), turnip tops (shalgam ka saag) etc. A bhujia made of cheap varieties of greens and a good helping of red chillies fried in oil is very often the only vegetable that some poor people can afford.

A bhartha is another form of a vegetable preparation which gives equally good results. A bhartha is made first by roasting the vegetable on an open charcoal fire and then mashing it. Bharthas are generally made from brinjals, marrow, butternut, etc.

The vegetable kofta consists of a mashed vegetable formed into balls and converted into a curry. It is similar to the meat koftas and in fact the two preparations can be differentiated only on tasting.

Saags or cooked tops of leafy vegetables are another class of dishes which are cheap and popular. Lentils and pulses, known as dals are also commonly used but unfortunately require a long cooking time.

Indian breads

In Cape Town only very few Indians, usually of the older generations occasionally bake their own bread on special occations. It is, however, important to mention the

varieties of Indian breads since they are an integral part of the diet in India.

The most popular bread of Northern India is a chapati. It is a flat disc of wholemeal baked on a flat griddle. The leavened variety of the same is a thick,compact, solid mass called phulka.

A parauta is a shallow fried wholemeal bread; the ghee is applied to a rolled-out piece of dough which is folded and rerolled. Puri is a form of bread very popular on festive occasions. It is deep fried and is of the same size as a saucer. It can be made out of flour, whole-meal or a mixture of both. Bathura is a form of thick leavned puri.

Tandoori preparations are tandoori roti, nans, bakarkhani and skeer-mals. Nan is a heartshaped leavened form very popular with meat dishes. It is a rich bread containing egg, milk, curd and butter. Sheer-mal is even richer than nan.

Sweets

Indian sweetmeats like Indian meat dishes are in a class by themselves. There is no parallel to them in European cookery. Indian sweetmeats can be served as puddings,

as well as teatime snacks. The most commonly served Indian sweetmeats are prepared from milk with substantial amounts of sugar. The milk used is either in the form of khoa (dried fresh whole milk) or chenna (Indian soft creame cheese). Khoa is prepared by boiling fresh milk until a semisolid mass is obtained, while Chenna is obtained by curdling milk with tartaric acid, separating the curds and suspending them in a muslin bag until all the whey drips out. Varying proportions of one or both of these substances can be mixed with ingredients like nuts or coconut.

Burfi, one of the Khoa preparations, is perhaps the simplest of the Indian sweets. Plain burfi that is practically nothing else but khoa is commonly prepared. Its taste however, is further improved by combining khoa with coconuts carrots, pistachios or white pumpkin pulp. Rasgulla and ras malai, two of the most popular Indian sweetmeats are a preparation of chenna alone, and gulab jaman is a combination of both khoa and chenna.

Not all Indian sweetmeats are prepared with milk. The Karachi halwa, a jelly-like sweetmeat, prepared from cornflour, gajjac, an Indian version of fudge; and balushahi, an eggless sugar-coated doughnut are typical examples of these.

In addition to the sweetmeats mentioned above, there are a few which are served as puddings. They are generally associated with relegious occasions, as for example, halwa

suji (a semolima pudding) served by the Sikhs on all religious gatherings, kheer (a rice pudding) served by the Hindus to the Brahmins and then to all worshippers at "autumn full moon", and the sewian (vermicilly pudding) given by the Muslims to friends on festive occasions. These puddings are included in the daily menu.

Savoury Dishes

Savoury dishes play an important role in entertainment. They are served on all special occasions, parties and often with the evening tea or coffee.

The most common one prepared or bought is the samosa which is essentially a pastry filled with either a savoury mince, a pea and potato mixture or a vegetable mixture.

Dorkas, moothias, dephlas, wari and bathakias are essentially dumplings, fritters or roti, prepared from any combination of pea, cake or maize flour which are delicately spiced with onions, chillies, herbs, ginger, coriander, sometimes masala, etc.

Other savouries are spicy cutlets, tartlets, kababs, etc.

Pickles and chutneys are served with almost every dish whether savoury or whether a meat, chicken or fish dish

at a meal. There are especially important if bland dishes are served such as dhals, (dishes made of pulses) which are part of most Indian meals.

Fruit preserves (murabbas), jams and jellies are eaten on various occasions, as desert, with cakes, with the savoury dishes, etc. Jams and jellies are homemade only in very few households.

Eating pattern during Ramadan

During the month of Ramadan Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset. At sunset the fast is broken with an uneven no. of dates, then tea is served with samosas, dalchies and other snacks. The main meal in the evening is then started with a soup. Indians are not great soup-eaters, but there is no evening meal during Ramadan without soup. Then one of the Indian meat or fish or chicken dishes is served. In the evening tea or coffee is served with savouries.

In some families dinner is carried almost into the early morning hours of the next day but this is a rare occasion. Breakfast, if any, must be taken before sunrise and usually consists of biscuits and tea, sometimes sandwiches are served.

On the last day of the fast a special dinner is prepared

usually having biryani or a similar dish called akknya as one dish. In the afternoon men go to the mosque while women and children visit friends and exchange cakes and other delicacies especially "the vermicilly pudding" with each other. Thereafter dinner is served starting with a soup and ending with numerous savouries and snacks.

(e) CAPE MALAY

THE CAPE MALAYS

The first group of Malays arrived at the Cape in 1667. A few asiatic slaves had been imported before that date but they were not Mohannedans. After this date groups arrived periodically from the East - Java, Ceylon, etc. On arrival at the Cape they had to help with the completion of public works. The majority of the Malays arrived in Cape Town during the 18th century. They were mainly slaves and political exiles. The political exiles were more important than the salves, not because of the numbers, but because they were persons of standing, with considerable influence.

Most important of the exiles who reached our shores was Sjech Yussuf. This remarkable leader was a thorn in the flesh of the Dutch East India Company in 1683, when he led a rising of Muslims in Java against the Dutch. Sjech Yussuf, brother of King Goa of Macassar, was born in 1628. In 1646 he went to Bantam on the Island of Java, where he spread the Muslim faith amongst the Javanese and married the daughter of the Sultan. Regarded as a man of great piety and culture, Sjech Yussuf exercised a great influence over the Bantamese and was an ally not to be despised. For political reasons he was deported with his family and followers to the Cape in 1693. (Most of his followers had

left the Cape again by 1704). It is said that Sjech Yussuf was the founder of the Muslim faith in Southern Africa. His grave at Eerste Rivier became the Mecca of the South, where thousands of pilgrims pay their respects annually to the memory of a noble exile.

After their term in the Cape expired, most of the slaves and political exiles returned home, leaving Southern Africa. But large numbers were divorced for good from their eastern homelands, and were in their new surroundings brought into close contact with the Western way of life. This applies particularly to the Malay slaves who as domestic servants were most sought after by the colonists. They shared the homes of the masters - a circumstance which affected to a high degree the alimentary customs of both master and slave. Most food combinations show Eastern and Western influences, and may be styled as typically South African.

The Cape Malays are essentially Muslims, and their religion is the strongest link that holds together the heterogenous group they are today. The two Muslim groups, the Malays and the Mohammedan Indians, live side by side in the Cape, with many common habits. When a Malay adopts the Christian faith, he ceases to regard himself as a Maly.

The Cape Malays follow the same religious rites as the Indian Muslims and the details have been discussed previously.

Food Habits and Eating Patterns

The Malay woman is a keen cook, keeping her kitchen spotlessly clean, even if the remainder of the house is untidy. Malays like the variety in their food and easily accept new dishes.

On the whole, the Malay daily meal pattern resembles to a large extent the European one (one the same socio-economic level). Breakfast usually consists of porridge, bread, butter and jam. Sometimes snoek or a fried egg is served. Tea and coffee are both equally acceptable. On Sundays, however, a completely different breakfast is served. The women get up very early in the morning in order to prepare koeksisters, bollas and spritskoek for the meal - no Malay family will go without koeksisters on Sunday morning.

The main meal during the week is usually served in the evening. It consists of one course. Prominent dishes are kerries (curries), bredies and afvalkos (offal) of some kind, either in the form of penslawar (curried tripe), or pootjies-en-tamaties (trotters and tomatoes), or pens-en-pootjies (tripe and trotters). Favourite bredies are pumpkin bredie and tomato bredie. Every bredie and kerrie is accompanied by rice, and a salad; sambal* or atjar* is eaten with it as a relish. A desert, such as gestoofde patats (baked sweet potatoes) or pampoensdol or a fruit may

* both condiments

follow. More expensive puddings are served on Sundays only. In a very poor family the meal of the week is kept for Thursday night, where usually one or more meat courses should be prepared.

Sunday dinner is always a special occasion. Soup is never served, but instead several meat courses are dished up. Every married Malay woman in a household cooks one dish, independently of the others present. (Due to overcrowded conditions often more than one family occupies a house). The table is laden with spicy foods.

At social gatherings women and men eat apart - they only share the same table when the family eats alone or with very close friends.

Most Malays use their fingers for eating solid foods, kerrie and rice, and so on, but for soup and puddings they are supplied with spoons, no knives are necessary as most of their food, such as meat, is cut up before cooking. All Malays wash their hands before and after eating.

RELIGIOUS FEASTS AND FASTS

Ramadan

This fast is essentially held in the same way by Muslim Indians and Malays. The fast is broken in the afternoon

with dates or a refreshing drink. Then the men go to the mosque and on their return supper is served. The Malays start off with boeboer, a milk soup with a vermicilly base, or a spiced milk drink prepared in a similar fashion. Then the main course, usually a bredie, and in the end a sweet are served. In some houses the table is laden with food but most Malays prefer a light meal. Boeboer can be substituted for by a soup, but not on Thursdays and Sundays and not on the 15th day of the fast. These are all considered as special days.

On the 27th night of Ramadan, the Holy Night, the houses are freshly decorated and illuminated with candles, and a particularly good meal is cooked.

The next day called Leberan is a special day. Everybody must have eaten in the morning before leaving the home. The men then go to the mosque while the women prepare food for the feast. The meal consists of numerous dishes, pies, puddings, roasts, kerries, bredies, salads, biryani, sosaties, gesmoorde hoender, rykepastei, hoender-en-vleispastei, kababs, penslawar and condiments are placed on the table. In the afternoon cakes are served and in the evening people pay each other visits. The next two days also consist of visiting friends and relatives and exchanging presents (cakes).

Moulidu 'N-nabi

The "feast of the Orange Leaves" at which women take a colourful part, is held on the birthday of the Prophet, which falls on the 12th day of Rabi-u 'L-anwal, but which may be celebrated at any time provided the necessary preparations are made. On this occasion the women go to the mosque. They sit on the carpeted floor on which the men usually assemble for prayers, and spend their time cutting up orange leaves, dipping them into costly smelling oils and tying them up in sachets (Rampi) which the men place in their breast pockets and later on the graves of deceased relatives. Attfour o'clock tea is served with a fantastic array of pastries, colourful cakes, fruit, konfyts (jams), melktert and other sweetmeats, all set out on tinsel paper plates. After tea everybody prays in a singing voice - the young women who have been to Mecca usually start the singing of prayers.

At six o'clock the feasting is renewed by supper being served, which includes roast chicken with tomato (only for men, as tomato juice may spoil the women's gowns should it drop on them,) lettuce, peas and potato crisps. Sandwiches made of home-made corned beef are handed around. Fruit is served to complete the meal.

After sunset the men come in for prayers. While the men pray, a few chosen women in the yard outside the mosque cook the special traditional food which they will eat after

sunset: biryani, spiced rice, roti and salad - which they always eat with their hands.

Roa - the Feast of Purification

Most important of the feasts is Leberan Hadji held in connection with the Prophet Ibrahim and those who make the Pilgrimage to Mecca. This feast is known throughout the Muslim world as Eid-ul-Korban. A sheep is sacrificed by the families who can afford to do so and shared with the poor. At the various mosques a distribution of portions is made to those who are not supplied by private persons. The lamb selected for the feast must be without blemish, must be treated with gentleness and may not see the knife or any blood.

Tamad

Completion of the Quaran is another important ceremony. On this day a Muslim boy completes his study of the Quaran, and the parents invite relatives and friends to hear what the boy has learnt. The boy has to recite the chapters from the Quaran, word-perfect and using good Arabic pronunciation, to his audience in the mosque. When he has proved that he knows the Quaran well, the family and friends celebrate this with a big feast which starts at about mid-morning. The ending time of the feast depends on the

amount of food there is, which, of course, depends on the socio-economic status of the parents, but the feast usually goes on to about 5 o'clock in the afternoon. The feast has to include the traditional biryani, which is the main dish at the occasion.

Die Doopmaal (the Baptismal Feast)

Seven days after a Malay baby is born it is taken to be named. On that seventh day the baby is wrapped in a medora and placed on a cushion on a silver platter. Around the child they put flowers. The child is baptised at the home of the parents, where relatives and friends are invited. When the baby has been baptised, the doopmaal is held consisting of melktert, vermicelli, sosaties, bobotie and koeksisters, botterbeskuitjies, klappertert, etc.

When a baby gets its first tooth this is celebrated by serving the relatives and friends pannekoek (pancakes) rolled in coconut.

Kiefayat (The Funeral Feast)

All domestic activity is stopped in a Muslim household when a member of the family dies. No food should be cooked in the house which harbours the corpse. The funeral

feast is prepared out of doors in the yard and neighbours reckon it an honour to offer their cooking facilities. Wortel bredie (Carrot bredie) is the traditional funeral dish and is served to mourners and friends on the funeral day, and on the 3rd, 7th, 40th and 100th day thereafter.

(f) CHINESE

THE CHINESE

The Chinese community in Cape Town is a very small one, consisting of only 200 to 250 people. Most Chinese have emigrated from Hong Kong, and not Taiwan or Communist China, and have been living in Cape Town for more than two generations; there are, however, some newcomers.

A large proportion of the Chinese people in Cape Town continue to observe diet and health practices - as far as possible - of their mother country. If a food item is not available here, it is ordered at a Chinese or Japanese shop or imported directly from Hong Kong.

There are practically no taboos for the Chinese, although the older generations tend to avoid mutton.

Rice is the staple food. Cereals have no place in the Chinese diet. Bread is only eaten in the morning in the form of sandwiches with a cup of coffee or tea. Traditionally, the Chinese breakfast consists of a bowl of watery rice with roasted peanuts. Pickled eggs, various jellies, pickled meats may be served - they aim at helping in man's waking up. Everything must be served cold except for the watery rice which must be served hot.

Most Chinese eat two main meals, one at lunch time, the other one at supper time. A Chinese family meal is essentially a spread, with all the dishes, whether fowl, fish, meat, egg, vegetables or soup, brought to the table at the same time, or when they are ready cooked. Since all dishes are savoury, (only considered side dishes, rice is the main dish) rice is eaten throughout the meal to absorb the savouriness, as well as to provide bulk. A feeling of well-being and satisfaction is an essential part of a good meal. Chinese eat for eating's sake, and not when they are hungry.

COOKING METHODS

Soups

Usually two soups are served with a meal. One of them should be a fish soup, the other one may be either a vegetable or meat or fish soup. Most soups have a broth base, even vegetable soups, which consist of chopped vegetables suspended in a meat broth. The soups should never be heavy and always be clear. They are not meant to be filling. Their function is to complement and help down rice, which is bland and neutral. In a way, soup replaces water on the Chinese dinner table. Tea is sometimes served throughout a meal to supplement soup, or it can be

taken in place of soup.

Meat Dishes

The Chinese prepare their meat dishes in, on the whole, seven different ways:

Quick stir-fried (usually diced, in slices or shredded).

red-cooked (stews, not cooked in water, but in small amounts of soy sauce, vinegar, sugar, etc.)

clear-simmering and steaming (to make meat very tender).

deepfrying (not very common).

short-boiling (boiling for one minute and then food is allowed to stand until cool.

hot-boiling.

gravy-cooking (vegetables and meat cooked in a gravy).

Meat, fish and chicken are usually cut into small pieces or steamed so tender that they can be eaten with chopsticks.

No carving is done at the table.

Vegetables are never boiled in water; they are usually fried in a little oil so that they remain crisp.

Desserts are seldom prepared. The Chinese are not fond of sweet food, they prefer their array of savoury dishes.

The Chinese celebrate a number of occasions with very large feasts to which the entire community is invited. Usually these feasts are held at the Chinese School in Mowbray. Many different dishes are prepared by the women and they are all served at once. A typical menu would be:

Shark fin soup
Fishball soup
Chinese Noodles
Rice (boiled)
Boiled white chicken
Roast pork
Deep-fried prawns
Abalone with vegetables
Fried chicken with vegetables
Stuffed Chinese Mushrooms.

These feasts are held on birthdays - only the eleventh, twenty-first, thirty-first, and so on are celebrated.

Special attention is paid to the 61st birthday and those thereafter. Another event is the "month-old-party". This is celebrated if the first child that is born to a couple is a boy and turns a month old. In some cases the one-month old girl is also celebrated.

The double tenth (tenth day of the tenth month) which is the Republic of China's day of independance, weddings, the Chinese new year are other important occasions.

Chinese folk practices still involve the belief in the two opposing components, the Yin and the Yang. The Yin component includes female, darkness, cold and emptiness. The Yang component encompasses male, light, warmth and fullness. All things or beings in the universe are supposed to consist of Yin and Yang. To maintain peace and harmony in society, and health in the mind and the body, the two opposing forces must be in perfect balance - imbalance is believed to cause illness.

Food is still thought to play a part in preventing and treating disease, although most Chinese see medical doctors to seek advice. The characterisation of food as either Yin or Yang is passed down in the family by tradition and practice. There exists no list of Yin and Yang foods, since their choice is an entirely personal matter depending on the family. One Chinese lady said, the only food her family avoided because it was too much Yang were the very hot and spicy Indian curries which contain chillies.

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